Still $1.50 APRIL 1987

MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE

NOW INCORPORATING THE NEWSLETTERS OF THESE ATARI CLUBS:
C.H.A.O.S. (LANSING) -- G.A.G. (FLINT)
C.A.C.E. (JACKSON) -- T.A.G. (SAGINAW/BAY CITY/MIDLAND)
B.K.A.U.G. (BATTLE CREEK) -- W.A.U.G. (ANN ARBOR)
G.K.A.U.G. (KALAMAZOO) -- G.R.A.S.S. (GRAND RAPIDS)

Atari News

Compiled by John Nagy

MORE on the 8-bit ATARI Emulator for the ST- Inside this issue of M.A.M... It looks like arangements are being made that will let author DAREK MIHOCKA release his public domain "ST TRANSFORMER" WITHOUT having to use ATARI ROMs... since it seems ATARI isn't interested in arranging anything. The "finished product could be released as early as sometime in MAY.

BATTERIES INCLUDED, Canadian makers of lots of great 8-bit and ST ATARI titles (and noted for a recent stance of NO COPY PROTECTION) has just been bought by ELECTRONIC ARTS. EA has developed the opposite reputation (HEAVY COPYPROTECTION, ANTI-ATARI, etc.). It looks like EA will continue to support many existing BI products, but is likely to drop those under development. Particularly likely to be dropped is PAPERCLIP ELITE, since it would be a direct competitor with EA's MS WRITE. 8-bit support, look out!

MAXIT, a computer show sponsored by the MICHIGAN COMPUTER CONSORTIUM (Lansing area computer clubs), will be held SUNDAY, APRIL 26, At the Clarion Conference Center in Lansing. Billed as the biggest show ever, admission is $2.50, with focus being local dealers and seminars.

GAMES COMPUTERS PLAY plays no more. Just after an expanded text-only service went into effect to supplement the innovative graphic-oriented telecommunications service, GCP abruptly closed up on February 28. Details are not plentiful, but money problems are the cause. They DON't expect to reopen as of this writing.

GEnie, a rapidly growing telecommunication service similar to but priced below COMPUSERVE and THE SCOURCE, has a special deal for ATARI owners (since ATARI maintains a direct access on GEnie, with frequent online conferences with well-placed officials). Register before the end of the year and save the $18 regstration fee. Call 1-800-638-9636 for the details.

WOULD YOU BELEIVE A 1200 BAUD ATARI MODEM... The company that seems to have changed their motto to "PRODUCTS without the PRODUCTION" now promises that the modem they announced over a year ago will be tested by the FCC and released "soon". The modem "will" support the 8-bit direct connection as well as the ST (standard) RS-232 cable. An 8-bit handler (totally new and not compatible with ANYTHING) handler and a special version of KEITH LEDBETTER's EXPRESS! terminal program will be SOLD SEPARATELY! YIKE!

M.A.C.E., a Detroit area ATARI CLUB that once boasted 1200 members before hard times and internal political disaster peeled them to today's 400 count, announced that GUESTS at their meetings will no longer be allowed unless they PAY a $2 fee (per family), for wich they also will get a copy of the M.A.C.E. newsletter and membership literature. BE ADVISED, fellow ATARIANS, you are not as welcome as you might guess at SOME other club meetings!

ATARI CORP OF SCANDANAVIA?? Yes, ATARI opened a "daughter" corporation in Sweden sometime in January, 1987... Work is reported progressing there with a dealer network, but further details of what ATARI needed a full fledged CORPORATION for are fuzzy. They have been selling machines overseas at a 2-to-1 ratio faster than stateside... maybe they plan to move?

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XM301 300bps modem	:	$ 44.95	Prowriter Ribbons	:	$ 4.95
520ST Color Package	*:	$ 895.00	Surge suppressors	:	$ 17.95
520ST Mono package	*:	$ 695.00	10-5.25" floppies	:	$ 9.95
1040ST Color package	*:	$1195.00	10-3.50" floppies	:	$ 19.95
1040ST Mono package	*:	$ 995.00	5.25"-50 flip'n'file	:	$ 8.95
800XL dust covers	:	$ 8.95	3.50"-30 flip'n'file	:	$ 14.95

8-bit Software

Sargon III	:	$ 19.95	Kennedy Approach	:	$ 19.95
Hitchhiker's Guide	:	$ 14.95	Spies Demise	:	$ 19.95
Goonies	:	$ 14.95	Dimension X	:	$ 19.95
Karateka	:	$ 24.95	F-15 Strike Eagle	:	$ 19.95
Basic XE	:	$ 69.95	Mad Spy vs. Spy	:	$ 19.95

ST Software

Thunder	:	$ 34.95	Arena	:	$ 39.95
Hex	:	$ 19.95	Alternate Reality	:	$ 39.95
ST Copy v. 3.0	:	$ 34.95	Hippo Computer Almanac:		$ 19.95
LDW Basic Compiler	:	$ 69.95	Flight Simulator II	:	$ 44.95

If you purchase over $100.00 worth of items at any one time with us you are qualified for the CASTLE DISCOUNT. The Castle Discount gives you 10% off of our price on anything in the store except hardware.

* This is a package item call for details on the package.

M.A.M. this Month

Editor: Rich Barnes (517) 349-0513

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MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE is an independent newsletter published by the Capitol Hill Atari Owner's Society and is not affiliated in any way with Atari Corporation. Atari, the Fuji symbol and the names of various Atari computer equipment are trademarks of Atari Corporation.

This publication is the official newsletter of several independent groups of Atari 8-bit and 16-bit computer users. It is intended for the information and education of their members as well as the dissemination of Atari related information. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the respective author and are not in any way official opinions of the associated user groups.

Other non-commercial USER GROUPS are granted permission to reprint articles from this magazine provided credit is given to the respective author as well as to the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine. Most original files are available from the C.H.A.O.S. BBS upon request, and also appear in DL7 on COMPUSERVE for downloading.

At the Crossroads... M.A.M. and the Future

From the Publisher,
John Nagy (517) 487-5646

Times change, expectations change, birth, death, infinity... And so it is with this publication. MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE has grown into a 40-page compendium of club news, industry news, tips, reviews, and computer humour.

It has not been without costs. And those costs MAY cause SOME of our current member clubs to reconsider their involvement in MAM.

As originally conceived (and promoted- mostly by me), MAM would cost each club 50 cents per issue mailed to their members. Since it was costing most clubs near that figure to produce a small local newsletter, it was an attractive offer. Mind you, 50 cents per issue would only pay for a 16 page newsletter- the remainder of the production costs would be made up by advertising revenues, with the magazine size variable according to the number of ads sold. Each club was heavily encouraged to participate in production of feature articles. In addition, they were also heavily encouraged to participate in AD SALES, in order for the magazine to have room for everything we would like to include. It was made clear that such sales were necessary in order to make the magazine worthwhile.

This worked with very mixed results. High quality feature material has been regularly contributed by a number of clubs. But 50% of all the ads have been generated by efforts of the central MAM group, not by the 8 clubs involved. Several times we have had only enough revenues to produce 28 or even as few as 24 pages, only enough room to give the most basic information by each club, with no feature articles. An issue like that was NEVER the intention for what MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE.

Rather than print such an issue, the Lansing club (C.H.A.O.S.) has several times "bailed us out" with the needed funds to add another sheet (4 pages) to the magazine. As the "publishing club" of the magazine and having the largest single membership in the group, they were willing to do this PROVIDED it would not continue. It amounts to a direct subsidy to the clubs that are not participating in the ad sales effort.

It actually costs about $1.10 per copy to generate and deliver 700-800 of a 40 page magazine like this one. (Postage alone would be 58 cents an issue if we didn't have the advantage of BULK MAIL rates!!) Any club that paid their 50 cents and didn't help in ads was

making some OTHER club (or the magazine itself) make up the difference.

Many ideas were kicked around to re-work the financial picture to afford a larger and more stable magazine. I consulted repeatedly with the heads of each of the clubs, looking for some reason to hope that the ad sales effort would pick up steam... with not a lot of success. Finally, it was suggested that each club should pay for what it gets, one way or another. If it doesn't contribute to the sales effort, it should not ride on the efforts of other clubs.

What we ended up with is this proposal: the BASE PRICE per issue to clubs will be 80 cents. Clubs will be credited 30% of the income resulting from any ad handled by that club. (AT LAST! INCENTIVE!)

These figures were arrived at by calculating the costs against the actual average ad sales performance compared to the number of members in the typical club. At these figures, the magazine can be at LEAST 28 pages if NO ads were sold (an UNLIKELY event!). With only a single ad sold (national, at full page rate), the cost per issue for a 50 member club would again net to about 50 cents per issue, plus allow additional pages in the magazine. Further sales can actually reduce the costs to a club BELOW the former levels. Battle Creek, for example, could pay a NET COST per issue of only 12 cents (!!!) if they were to sell a SINGLE page of advertising! (Several clubs will ALREADY be AT or BELOW 50 cents with their current ads!)

It cannot be stressed enough that this IS NOT A PRICE INCREASE. This is a costs re-allocation. Due to our higher volume, the magazine costs NO MORE to produce per page than ever, even with the new covers and two color art. I simply am no longer willing to spend all my own time selling ads (in order to subsidize clubs that have not been contributing) and then produce the magazine as well. Believe me, I lose my own personal money in this magazine every month (phone calls!!) as well as spending too many hours to count. This work MUST be distributed AS ORIGINALLY INTENDED or I cannot continue at all. The new "rates" allow the clubs to regulate their costs by expending effort, or to pay for the luxury of mere consumption. If the member clubs can't find anyone interested in working for the good of their clubs, the clubs will simply have to pay for what they get... or not get it. Just like they would with a local newsletter. The difference is that THIS effort produces a statewide, 40 page magazine that has few rivals ANYWHERE for content or style.

This has been an upsetting experience to me. I have had long discussions with multiple club officers (on MY phone bill) about options and needs, and the officers have universally agreeing both in theory and principle to the need and fairness of a rate structure change. Now, some of those same officers are reacting in public shock and even outrage now that the rate has become a reality. Hey, I'm only trying to keep the magazine paid for.

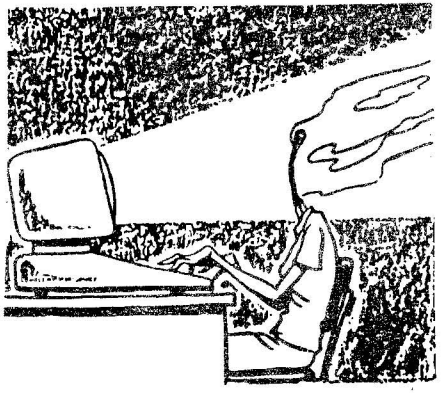
Is this the last rate change? I don't even want to continue making this magazine if costs can't be contained within this proposed budget. I will NOT recommend any further price increase. I would instead support dissolution of the magazine, as it can only fail if the clubs fail to support it.

With this formula, It is possible that we could even expand to as many as 48 pages while bringing the cost per issue BELOW the 50 cent mark for ALL the clubs, IF the clubs actively participate. And sales, particularly NATIONAL ones, are actually pretty easy due to our size and quality of production!

It will be up to each club to decide if they will continue in MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE. You have seen the product. We can be whatever you want us to be, but not without your support. Will there be enough interest- either in FUNDS, EFFORT, or both- to keep it working? Please discuss this matter with your club officers and make your thoughts- and willingness to help- known.

DO-IT-YOURSELF HUMOR DEPARTMENT

What's your pick for the best caption for this cartoon? There are a couple ideas to get you started... Send us your best shot through your local editor, and we will print the best next month! Let's get crazy...



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3) M.A.M. Editor checks E-MAIL from club presidents after rate restructure.

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CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY

SERVING THE LANSING AREA ATARI

C.H.A.O.S. is the CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY, serving the ATARI community of the Lansing, Michigan area. The CAMPUS HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY is the Michigan State University chapter of C.H.A.O.S.

Membership dues are $12.00 per year and entitle the member to a 1 year subscription to the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine, a free disk from our regular library, access to our other libraries and facilities as well as access to our other resources.

Dues may be paid at any regular C.H.A.O.S. meeting or by mail. If not using an official Membership Application, please include your Name, Address, Phone and a list of your equipment and interests.

Sysop John Nagy and C.H.A.O.S. invite you to call one of the country's finest BBS's at (517) 371-1106, 24 hours a day at 300/1200 baud. (ATASCII/ASCII)

Inquiries regarding C.H.A.O.S., mail orders, memberships and etc, should be sent to:

C.H.A.O.S.
PO Box 16132
Lansing, MI 48901

Meetings take place on the 2nd and 3rd Saturdays of each month, at the MSU Physics-Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10:00 am sharp and last until 1:00 pm.
S.T.I.N.G. (S.T. INterest Group), for Atari ST owners, meets on the SECOND Saturday of the month.
The General meeting, for 8-bit Atari owners, takes place on the THIRD Saturday of each month. DIRECTIONS TO MEETING PLACE:
East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics-Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right hand side. Park in the gated lot just past the building.

Illegal copying and any violation of copyright laws are not condoned or allowed at any C.H.A.O.S. sponsored function, nor are allowed on the club BBS.

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICERS OF C.H.A.O.S.

Position	Name	Phone #
President	Leo Sell	349-0404
Vice President	John Baker	641-4430
Sec'y-Treasurer	Gary Ferris	393-2593
8-bit Rep.	Marvin Goldstein	332-5471
16-bit Rep.	John Johnson	355-4219
Membership Coord.	Gary Ferris	393-2593
Library Manager	John Baker	641-4430
Asst. Librarian	Malcolm Cleveland	485-6743
Asst. Librarian	Sally Nagy	484-1976
Publ. Librarian	Richard Evans	351-2381
Program Coord.	Guy Hurt	484-7675
ST SIG Coord.	Brian Goluska	332-4415
BBS System Op.	John Nagy	487-5646
BBS Librarian	John Baker	641-4430
Newsletter Editor	Jeff Bone	321-5510

Presidential Address

by Leo Sell

There is a little bit of this and a little bit of that to tell you about this month. First of all, we have another Computer Show coming up. The Michigan Computer Consortium is sponsoring MaxIt on April 26 at the Clarion. Unless something unforeseen occurs, C.H.A.O.S. will be there in its usual big way. But, of course, we need help. Please pitch in with equipment and time. Call me and volunteer today!!!

Speaking of volunteering, this is a new C.H.A.O.S. year. There have been some changes and additions to the jobs that need done. That means we need more volunteers. We are in dire need of someone to help us out with newsletter advertising. Newsletter costs have increased, but we can lower them by handling some of the advertising duties ourselves. This is an opportunity for someone to really help out with an important job.

There are other opportunities to get involved as well. We must increase the pool of people involved. The same people have been involved in one job or another for two or three years and

they're getting burned out. If you want C.H.A.O.S. to continue you have to get involved.

At the March General meeting we took time to recognize some people who have made extraordinary efforts over the past few months. I would like to add a word of thanks to ALL of our volunteers. Thank you ever so much. Without your efforts, C.H.A.O.S. would not exist.

On other fronts, CES is coming up at the end of May. Should be fantastic. Hopefully Atari will be still closer to actually marketing its new machines. And who knows what new announcements they may make. If you would like to go as part of the C.H.A.O.S. delegation, let me know.

One last thing. I've cleaned out my closets and started thinking about reconfiguring my system. No I'm not buying an ST, or anything that spectacular. But I do have a few items for sale including: 130XE (320K) $125, an orginal 800 (48K) $50, a complete ATR8000 (replaces the 850 interface, plus acts as a printer buffer, and gives you CP/M capabilities) setup, including a DSDD drive, power supply and case, for $300, and a few items for hackers that I'll take almost any offer for, including a TTL monitor, an ITT MSDOS computer (junked out), and IBM 64 watt power supply, a full height dual disk case, and so on. Give me a call and make me an offer (517-349-0404).

Til next month, happy Atari Computing...

Meeting Minutes

Seretary Treasurer's Report
By: Gary Ferris

March was election month at CHAOS and some new faces are on the 1987 edition of the board of directors. The new board members are:

John Baker - Vice President. John replaces John Nagy who stepped down to devote more time to the Michigan Atari Magazine.

Marvin Goldstein - 8-Bit Rep. Marvin fills the position vacated by Adam Slonim when he moved away.

John Johnson - 16-Bit Rep. John is officailly elected to the post he was appointed to this winter.

Congratulations to these three new members. The current board is now:

Leo Sell	-	President
John Baker	-	Vice President
Gary Ferris	-	Sec/Treas
Marvin Goldstein	-	8-Bit Rep.
John Johnson	-	16-Bit Rep.

Lots of excitement was generated by the newly introduced 40 page library catalog plus all disks are now double sided except for Disks of the Month and Antic/Analog disks.

Several members were awarded certificates in recognition of their outstanding contributions to the club. There are many others who certainly were deserving of praise also.

John Baker demod a good DOM which was heavily graphics oriented this month.

Jim Baker and Dennis Kazee combined for a fine demo of Atari Planetarium, the highlight being the view of the little known 'Sneaker Constellation'.

The treasury took a beating this month with the cost of printing the library catalogs but still retains a good balance of $846.87.

Gary R. Ferris

ST

ST-UTTERINGS
by Brian Goluska

The ST special interest group of CHAOS meets the 2nd Saturday of each month, at the Physics-Astronomy building of MSU. See the CHAOS title page for directions. In March, a snowSTorm came again the night before the ST meeting. Over 20 people ignored the snow and attended. Equipment was also adequate, with 2 systems and 4 disk drives. Running ST output through the overhead video system is now routine, although a conversion box is on order to do this without using a VCR, and to improve the video quality.

John Johnson was elected ST sig representative to CHAOS, which is the only elected position that the sig has. The sig does have a new librarian, Scott Evans, and Chet Kapusinski has begun the new ST sig publications library. For better or worse, I remain the ST sig program coordinator. An ST membership coordinator, which would include coordinating membership, money, and records with the CHAOS treasurer, is still a position waiting for a volunteer. We also need someone to help out with the library during meetings, i.e. format and create extra library disks.

Any publications that can be donated to the ST library will be welcomed. After all, a book or magazine does much better being read than taking

up space on your bookshelf. Publications can be checked out one meeting and returned at the next. Peter Miller demonstrated and described ZOOMRACKS II (to be reviewed in a later issue). ZOOMRACKS II is a unique data base/file manager program. In general, Peter is satisfied with his purchase, and intends to use this product. Apparently several small businesses do all their bookkeeping on ZOOMRACKS II. Peter especially liked that it had a menu, for when you don't know the commands, but also keystroke commands, for when you are experienced. Further description will wait for a full review in a future issue.

Among other software, MONOPOLY from the CHAOS ST library was demonstrated. The new CHAOS SOFTWARE LIBRARY DISK CATALOG already needs an addendum sheet for ST software, since the number of public domain ST programs is growing so quickly. Besides MONOPOLY, a C compiler and a spreadsheet have been added to the library. After the formal meeting was over, nobody left, they just formed small groups and talked. One item mentioned was that an IBM formatted 3 1/2 double sided diskette will read and write properly on an ST. No code file can run, of course, but Ascii text files can be transferred OK. As soon as IBM users convert from their 5 1/4 drives to the new 3 1/2, they will become ST compatible!

In closing, a very simple ST tip. If you're using the mouse to select a group of file names to copy or delete, it's necessary to press the button above the 1st file, then drag below the last file, to select the group. Sometimes its difficult to control the mouse, moving it straight down to the target file. But if you move the mouse to the right before moving it down, you get a box shape that's easier to control.

Besides a great deal of library work, usual discussion of problems, vendors, and software comparisons took up much of the meeting. One unusual topic was electricity. One member swears by his surge protector: When an electrical problem occurred, he lost his refrigerator, TV's, and other appliances. But his surge protector blew and his computer survived. Another member said don't EVER unground your color monitor (don't use a 2 prong adapter for its 3 prong plug).

Mark Smathers also talked about the upgrade he got for his 520 ST. While he went to 1 Megabyte now, he also had sockets put in for adding the new 1 Megabit chips when they come down in price. This will allow him to go to 2 1/2 Megabytes eventually. According to Mark, this is the best that can be done without unsoldering the original chips on the motherboard. It would be possible to go to 4 Megabytes by doing extensive motherboard work.

John Johnson and Dave Spinnet concluded the meeting with a demo of Flight Simulator II for the ST (which was reviewed last month in this magazine).

As usual, I'll close with a little tip. Many programs, like First Word, show a window of file titles when you want to load from disk. For example, First Word might show A:*.DOC, and all the titles that have the extension DOC. If you want to look at another drive, like B:, you can click on the directory line, left arrow to the :, backspace, and change A to B. The result is B:*.DOC. If you click on the grey window bar, you'll get a directory of every file on B:, or B:*.*. If you click in the titles area, however, you'll get those files that match the specifier, in this case every file ending in DOC. You can, of course, change the directory line, like D:*.PIC.

STop in at the ST meeting.

By: John Baker, C.H.A.O.S. Librarian

Change. It's what keeps you young or makes you old, depending on your point of view. C.H.A.O.S. itself, the BBS, this magazine, the library---- all influenced by change. And all changed by the influence of interested members.

One change that should be obvious by now is the new library listing. Several things merit mentioning. First of all, the listing is huge! A whopping 40 pages! Even at that size though, it does not contain everything in the library. I had to chose a cutoff point at which I no longer added things to the listing. An update sheet is already in the works. In fact we just added an update sheet for the ST section.

Second, the 8-bit library is now double sided, but the price has remained the same. Let me see, If I get out my trusty XL and do some figuring---HMMMM (RUN "D:FIGURING")----- Hang on-----WOW! It tells me that I am getting twice as much for the same price! Who says computers aren't practical.

Third, the listing is in a new format. This should make for easier reading. Demos, Pic files, AMS are all listed with file name and sector count. Printshop graphic icons are all illustrated.

Fourth, the ST library is now included in the catalog and ST files are set up in category sections making a more unified library arrangement. Special thanks to John Johnson for

the hard work involved to make this change. Also because of tighter quality control, the active search and addition of new ST files, and to allow uniformity in the library, ST disk prices will go to $5.00 per disk.

"New ST files did I hear him say?" You bet! Doubling or tripling the size of the ST library is my first project. Be assured though, that quality and not quantity is my primary objective. Much good public domain software is available for the ST, and I'm going to make sure that our members have access to it.

Another benefit that I began last month is giving a free ST library disk to anyone applying for or renewing their ST membership.

Disk of the month feature disks have done very well for the 8-bit section. I am going to institute that same opportunity for our ST users. Don't spend all of your time and energy searching for new public domain ST files. Get them monthly on our ST Disk of the Month. Each new disk will be demoed and offered at the meeting.

So you can see that a C.H.A.O.S. membership is your ticket to more enjoyment out of your Atari, no matter which model you use. See you at the meeting!

P.S.: If you aren't a CHAOS member and want a copy of our great new 40 page SOFTWARE catalog, send $2.00 and your address to "CHAOS DISK CATALOG", Box 16132, Lansing, MI, 48901!

Telecom

The CHAOS DOWNLOAD
by JOHN NAGY

At last I can tell you that the CHAOS BBS is operating with a 10 meg hard drive! We have been working at it since December, but finally the replacement drive unit arrived this month, we plugged it into the MIO box, and ZAP! It is FAST!!! I do believe overall that our software is among the fastest BBS systems ANYWHERE.

We will be soon re-organizing the structure of the files section on the BBS to provide more information and more ease of selection. We plan to keep 400-500 files online at most times, with many "standard" selections (to include the "basics" of utilities, communications, and some top games and demos). Plus, there will be "current" selections whose stay on the list may be shorter lived. You will find a large selection of ST programs as well, a feature impossible to provide without LOTS of storage room.

ALSO: plan to use a new feature that will soon allow you to send a file to a specified individual by "attaching it" as a download to a private message... and the receiver can delete the file and message when he gets it!

Presently we are suffering with a MIO bug that was a new one to ICD Corp's TOM HARKER. I had to call him to say that the ASCII translation in the MIO device was INCOMPLETE. Inverse video characters are sent as such, rather than translated into the standard character like an 850 would. This causes all kinds of hassles for "IBM" type terminals using our system, and even blows the MI-TERM software for the ST into nonoland. Gary Ferris is working on a machine language filter now as an interim solution. Actually, this situation allows a very unusual opportunity... we could in fact set up ANSI COLOR GRAPHICS like the big guys do! The color information is sent as high-bit characters, usually unsendable in ASCII translation on an ATARI...

NAHHHHH.

We are adding MESSAGE BASE MANAGERS and BBS LIBRARY ASSISTANTS. Apply online if you would like to help. We will also start another round of CLUE! if we get enough applicants.

Till next month, SEE YA IN CHAT!!
(The CHAOS BBS, 517-487-5646)

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BITS AND PIECES

FROM THE

BATTLE CREEK ATARI USER GROUP

NEXT MEETING
Vo-ed Center April 9, 7PM

Presidential Address

by Chuck Steele

Well, it is April and I hope everyone has got their Tax Forms in. Hope some of you have put your Atari's to work for you in doing your taxes. I have found doing my taxes on the computer to be so much easier and quicker.

At our first meeting at the Vo-ed center we were treated to seeing some of our favorite programs on a 40 inch projection TV. Thanks, Dan, for arranging this. I feel the new location has much to offer us as we expand. For those of you who weren't there, the room is between the front east and front west entrances across from the office. If you enter from the far west entrance, you make a left and down the hall, make a right and the room will be on your left. If you enter from the rear of the building, make a right and go all the way down the hall, and the room is on the far left corner. Hope nobody got lost and couldn't find us.

I would like you to check your mailing labels to see your expiration date. We will stop sending you this newsletter if you aren't paid up. You may mail your dues to Josephine.

Todd had a nice demo of Hard Ball. The graphics are really neat. You get camera views like watching a game on TV. For instance you get a view from center field while you are pitching. Split screens and music. Some of us felt it was more entertaining than MicroLeague Baseball!! And it was all the better on the large screen. Does anyone remember the stick figures on computer games back in the 70's??

Todd presented the BCAUG disk of the month. Featured was a great Chess game. Todd let the computer play itself on the easy level. The moves were fast and white was winning when we finally switched to another program. Dungeon was a game that takes one back to the days of yore but Todd needs help!! We had two nice Graphic Conversion programs. One was CONVERT.BAS and the other was RLE. CONVERT.BAS allows you to change a picture from one graphic standard to almost any other Atari graphic format. Real handy if you want to edit some picture files and you don't have the correct drawing program. RLE converts pictures to a Graphic Standard so you can send them via modem to another brand computer. And CHARSET is yet another Character Set Editor for those of you who want a different type face on your computer screen. Want an international type face such as Greek, Hebrew, Russian or Japanese? Have fun. If you haven't been coming to meetings you are missing out!!

And if that wasn't enough we had a slide show and a demo of the San Francisco Fogger. Thanks Todd and Dan, good job!!

This month I plan to show you my Atari movie, so bring your popcorn, sit back and enjoy.

NEW BCAUG OFFICERS

CHAIRMAN:	
Chuck Steele	964-1701
LIBRARIAN:	
Todd Harris	965-5354
NEWSLETTER:	
Tom Siemietkowski	963-4475
SECRETARY:	
Mike Engle	964-3033
TREASURER:	
Josephine Yeager	968-8401
MEMBERSHIP:	
Dennis Martin	962-1024

Support your ATARI clubs!! Attend the monthly meetings, take part in the projects, and your use and enjoyment of your ATARI will grow with your knowlege and experience! GREAT CLUBS are part of what makes POWER without the PRICE more than just another motto!

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Star NX-10 Printer	$269.00	Star NX-15 Printer	$429.00
Atari 130XE Computer	$149.00	Atari 1050 Disk Drive	$149.00
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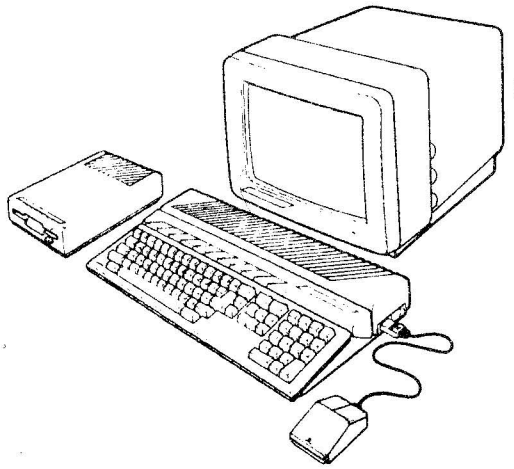

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GENESEE ATARI GROUP

Viewpoint

Presidential Mumblings for April
by Jim Steele

....exerpts from a recent Byte House press conference .....

Well, the first topic at the March meeting was the upcomming "Atari Magic" show in Detroit. At this point in time, nothing is certain.(To the best of my memory) No doubt as the show dates approach, we'll have a better idea as to what's going on. Since GAG is a very informal group, we don't have the finances to bankroll the show to any extent. Nor do we have the "legal existance" to enter into contracts, for that matter. The general consensus among the March adderdees was that we'd supply volunteer gofers at the show in exchange for a club booth and some kind of cut from the gate. All of this is still tentative, and subject to negotiation. (See ya in Reykjavik!) Look for further news in the comming months.

The second issue raised was the "hands off management" style of the Wednesday meetings. Personally, I prefer the freewheeling bull session format though I suppose it does leave the newcommer out in the rose garden. At any rate, next time we will despense with the "flamming" about the latest rumors from the mill. Look for sub groups on the following topics "ST" "BASIC programming" "Graphics" and "adventure games" and whatever else we get requests for. If you feel like leading one of these SIGs, great!

See ya in April, Jim "tef"

Next Meetings:

April 8, 6:30pm
April 25, 10 am. National Computer Clinic
(note new time and place!)
May 13, 6:30 pm Neithercut
May 23, 10:00 am National Computer Clinic

Disk Library

Library Offerings For April
by Jerry Cross

This month, I will be starting a new policy. Well, sort of new. Gil has been doing it with the ST library for a couple of months now. But starting in April, if you purchase 10 club disks, the price will drop to $2 each. (A savings of $5!). With all the new disks added in the last year it's real hard to purchase them in bulk, so I hope this will help out.

The new catalog is finally finished, but the Xerox machine at work broke down in the middle of copying, so it will be a little while longer before they are mailed. There will be a few available at the meeting for you to pick up though.

Also, I just returned from the Allentown AtariFest, and have some freebies to give away, so plan to attend the next meeting.

Well, lets get started...

Disk #182 contains QUEST FOR POWER, another game much like the "Pyramid" game from last month. This is another graphic/adventure type game.

Disk #183 is a utility program that will take a graphic adventure game (like this month's QUEST FOR POWER) and modify the maze or characters. Full instructions are on the disk.

Disk #184 is an older disk I have had for several months, waiting to find a place in the library. ATARITOONS is a collection of "cartoons" that were created with a utility included on the disk. These cartoons are created with ATASCII graphic characters, much like the movies you may have seen on local bbs's.

Disk #185 is called "Eyes of the Illuminater in 3D". It's another adventure game from the Cleveland Atari club. I haven't quite figured out what catagory to put this in. It's part pinball, part graphic adventure game. That's what the author wanted though.

Disk 186 is another DigiVisions disk. It contains a lot of good Computereyes pictures, plus a slideshow player.

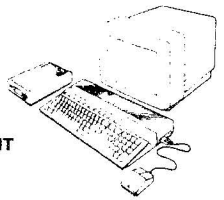
Disk #187 and 188 are more RLE pictures from Compuserve. More disks will be added in coming months.

Finally, Disk 189 contains lots of graphic and sound demo's, including several sound demo's from Germany.

That's it for this month. I'll see you at the meeting.

-Jerry

ST News



ST NEWS FOR FLINT
by Gil Merciez

The ST attendance at the meetings has been steadily growing over the past few months and with that growth, sales of the library disks have exploded. By the April meeting the library will be over 50 disks.

I will also have the newly completed disk catalog which, thanks to Publishing Partner, will be of a manageable size allowing me to make copies enough for everyone. Hopefully, I will soon be able to track down a laser printer to run off a master copy to improve the appearance even more. The next project will be to compile both an alphabetical listing of all the programs followed by a listing arranged by program categories. Good things take time, however, so be patient.

The Saturday morning workshop sessions have been moved to National Computer Clinic on Saginaw just north of Bristol in Burton. The starting time will be at 10 am and this informal session will last until 12:30 or 1pm. We'll try this out for a few months to see how it works out. We should have access to more ST's there. The Saturday sessions are held on the Fourth Saturday of every month.

Two new disks of Tiny Pics, Volumes 9 & 10 will be available in April. Both of these disks contain some stunning artwork as well as some breathtaking examples of digitized color pictures.

I have enough GFA Basic material for a second disk of programs and programming examples for those who interested in this blazingly fast language. One of the members had asked me to convert the ST Puzzler from the March Antic to GFA Basic. I finally got around to it and as expected, I now will have to go back and add some pause commands to slow the darn thing down. I may even get ambitious and add an option to import picture blocks rather than geometric shapes. On second thought, I'm probably not that ambitious.

There will also be at least one disk containing a variety of utilities and an arcade type game. Utilities include an animator program, a disk library program that allows you to add comments, and an aliasing program that allows you to rename multiple files at once. Also included is a splendid tutorial program on the GEM Desktop that guides you through all of the functions with hands on examples and explanations. It's perfect for the novice ST owner.

It has recently come to my attention that most ST owners also have rather larger stock portfolios to manage. With the time these people spend hunched over their ST, they tend to not devote as much time as they should tracking their 6 and 7 figure investments in the financial journals. Fear not, for in April there will be a Stock tracking program in the GAG library that will allow you to track those precious stocks keeping tabs on their daily performances, highs and lows and other interesting data.

There is a relatively new monthly magazine called ST X-Press which can be purchased with a program disk for a very reasonable $8.50. The publisher states that while the programs are copyrighted, feel free to distribute them through user groups and bulletin boards as long as credit is given to the magazine. Look for programs from ST X-Press to soon start appearing in the GAG library along with associated source code. Programs are generally written in C, OSS Personal Pascal, Assembly, or ST Basic. They have several good examples for Pascal programmers.

Also look for a combination Ramdisk and print spooler accesory that allows you select and deselect ramdisk and/or print spooler sizes as well as set your configuration on boot up. A special treat is a small program which will allow you to auto boot GEM programs. Up until now it was only possible to run a TOS based program (A program that doesn't use the GEM interface) from the Auto folder. This Gemstart program when put into an auto folder will now allow you to cold boot your favorite GEM application compliments of our ST friends in Germany.

I am also always searching for volunteers who would be willing to demo some of their newest software, hardware, etc. Even I sometimes tire of listening to myself. See you in April.

-Gil

Genesee Atari Group is a mon-profit group of Atari users in and around Flint, Michigan. Write to :
G.A.G. c/o Jim Steele 4711 Drummond Square, Flint, MI 48504

Membership dues are $10/year which entitles you to year's subscription to the GAG newsletter, now a part of the Michigan Atari Magazine. Membership also brings access to our Disk and print libraries. (If joining by mail, please make the check payable to the current president.)

? ? ? GRAND RAPIDS ATARI SYSTEMS SUPPORTERS

MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE WELCOMES G.R.A.S.S. - GRAND RAPIDS ATARI SYSTEM SUPPORTERS. With this issue, the Magazine grows to a circulation of over 700 and still growing. Although we may not be adding more clubs to the newsletter, both NATIONAL SUBSCRIPTIONS and NEWS STAND / COMPUTER STORE SALES are continuing to increase our readership. Participate in the voice of MICHIGAN ATARI USERS! MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE!

Meetings

Wyoming Library
1350 Michael S.W.
First Wed. of the Month
Informal meeting: 6:30-8:00
Formal meeting: 8:00-9:00

Presidential Address

by Ron Largo

G.R.A.S.S. News

I know most of you are forced to order Atari equipment from the magazines. It would be a good idea to read the article in Analog before ordering things from Black Patch. Many club members have told me that they have good service from Electronic One, Columbus, Ohio.

WE WILL BE LOOKING AT LOGOS during our club at the April meeting. Bring your art work (electronic or otherwise) to the meeting. We will have the large screen set up to display your work so the club can pick a winner.

We are planning a contest for programmers. Submit your program to run on an eight bit Atari at the May meeting. The program can be anything you would like and in either basic or machine language. Programs that use printers and other devises will be considered on an equal basis with straight computer programs. There will be a prize for the best program and we will try to put together a disk of the submissions for the club library. Several members have been asking about educational programs and also printer drivers for Atariwriter and Atariwriter+. If You have such things and can share them with the club (public domain) we would like to put them in the Library. Bring them to a meeting and see Chuck about adding them to the library.

About 50 members have paid their dues at the present time, but the list of delinquent members is too long. Send a check to George Nosky or bring it to the next meeting. (I guess if you have this magazine you are up to date with your dues and I don't need to tell you this, but if you know of members who haven't paid their dues.....)

...BUT D'YA KNOW WHAT GETS ME REALLY MAD!!?... IF IT WERE ANOTHER GIRL JOHNNY'S WITH ALOT LATELY, NO PROBLEM, BUT HOW DO YOU COMPETE WITH ATARI?
HISTORY
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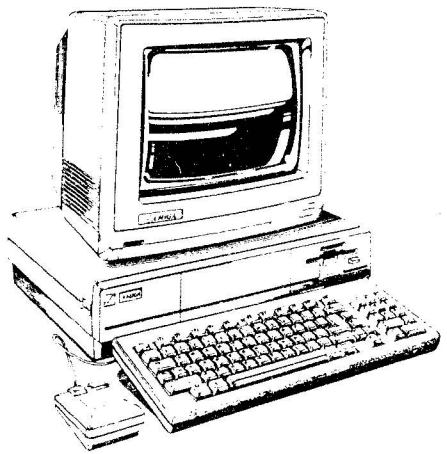
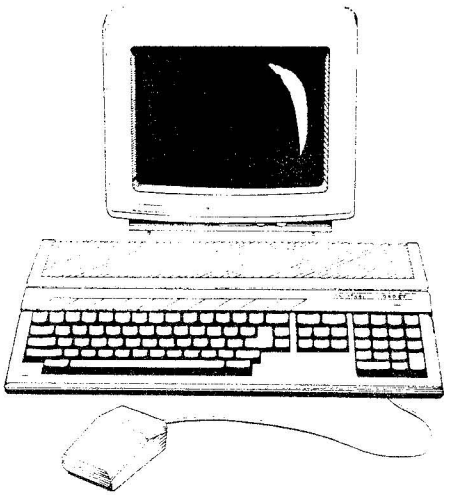




WASHTENAW ATARI USERS' GROUP

NEXT WAUG MEETING ON APRIL 14 AT WINES SCHOOL

Meeting Minutes

REPORT ON 3/10/87 MEETING
BY MIKE OLIN

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 pm by Mike Pieronek. Mike announced that the feature demos for this meeting was WORD PROCESSING.

Mike Olin discussed his opinion that the club should organize with formally elected officers and develop a club "Charter" that would go into effect when the club first meets after summer break. Mike noted that there have been occasions where decisions had to be made concerning the entire group when the opinions of the members were not obtained. An attempt to formally organize the club should be aimed at establishing a more democratic procedures and to distribute some of the work load over a larger percentage of the membership. The membership approved such action and Mike Olin volunteered to begin the development of a WAUG Charter and will solicit aid from other members in the near future.

Mike also noted that the club is growing larger at every meeting and that many faces are familiar while the names remain elusive. Everyone was given a few moments to announce their names and give a few tidbits about themselves and their interest in WAUG and Atari.

Doug Feldman spent a few moments discussing the status of the WAUG Treasury. The treasury is currently nearly depeleted due to recent purchases of 8-bit and ST disks, the continuing expense of the Michigan Atari Newsletter (MAM) and the obligation towards room rental at Wines School.

The publisher of MAM has informed Doug of a 30 cent increase for each mailed copy of MAM along with a formula for reducing the per-copy cost by club sales of advertising. At the current rate, we cannot continue our association with MAM without completely depleting the Treasury within 3 months. The members were asked to consider the following options:

1) Volunteers will sell ads
2) Increase WAUG membership and renewal rates to reflect the additional cost
3) Disassociate from MAM and return to writing our own newsletter

Two WAUG members expressed an interest in producing a WAUG newsletter. Pattie and Bill Rayl showed a sample of their work for the members to consider. A decision must be made by the members at the next monthly meeting.

Doug announced again that the WAUG BBS would be retired on June 9 unless a volunteer is found to run it. Interested persons can leave him a message on the BBS (662-3689).

Mike Pieronek discussed his efforts to reorganize the 8-bit disk library. He passed out several copies of the new catalog and noted the disk number is prefixed with a category indicator. In the last month, he has increased the library from 35 to 56 master disks. Both Tim Grzechowski and Paul Walkowski volunteered to assist Mike in future library activities. (As always, disks will be sold to members only.)

The following persons demoed word processors: (see the feature articles in the March issue of MAM for descriptions)

Doug Feldman	Atari Writer Plus
Paul Walkowski	Writer's Tool
Mike Pieronek	Letter Perfect
Mike Pieronek	TextPro
Mike Pieronek	PaperClip XE
Craig Harvey	1st Word ST

The meeting was then adjourned for sales of library disks. Mike Olin and Bob Carlini demoed ICD's MIO for interested members. The next meeting of WAUG will be held on April 14 and will feature ARCADE GAMES with a new demo every 10 minutes.

LIST OF FUTURE WAUG ACTIVITIES:

APR 14 --- ARCADE GAMES MARATHON
MAY 12 --- GRAPHICS EDITORS
JUN 9 --- FLEA MARKET & OFFICER ELECTIONS
NO MEETINGS PLANNED FOR JULY & AUGUST

Disk Library

WAUG 8-BIT DISK LIBRARY NEWS

At the March 10 meeting, Mike Pieronek described the improved and expanded 8-bit disk catalog and the new disk ordering procedure. The 56 disks in our library are now organized by program category as follows:

A = Antic Public Domain
C = Communications
F = Fonts & PICs
G = Games
L = Languages
M = AMS Music
P = Print Shop Utilities
U = Utilities
Z = Special Disks

Mike will passing out a complete print-out of the 8-bit catalog to all members who attend the next few meetings.

Because of the greatly expanded size of the library, the increased expense of maintaining several copies of each disk, and the inconvenience of duplicating disks during the meetings, Mike decided to start an advance ordering system for the purchase of WAUG 8-bit disks. AND there is a new economical pricing policy. WAUG members are invited to order disks by calling Mike at home or by leaving him a message on one of the local Atari Bulletin Boards (see the list at the end of the newsletter). One disk will cost $2.00. Two disks will cost $3.00, with the second disk on the flip side.

Mike also plans on presenting a 'DISK OF THE MONTH' at each meeting. This disk will be available for $2.00 without advance ordering. We hope these improvements will increase your enjoyment of the WAUG Library. Please feel free to make comments and suggestions at the next meeting.

ST Library

At the MArch 10 meeting, WAUG received a generous donation of 10 new library disks. Craig Harvey, our temporary ST Librarian says that there are now 15 different disks filled with excellent public domain programs for the ST. We need a volunteer from WAUG to catalog and manage the new ST library. Our new price for WAUG ST Library disks is now only $3.00. We also learned that Basic Bits 'N Bytes of Westland now sells 3 1/2 inch disks for $1.19/1 or $1.09/50.

Viewpoint

MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE:
DISCUSSION OF WAUG OPTIONS
by Doug Feldman

At the March 10 meeting of WAUG, we discussed the financial problems caused by the recent rate increase instituted by the publisher of MAM. For the first 3 months of 1987, WAUG has paid 50 cents per issue for each active member. This included all mailing and reproduction costs. The only other cost involved is mailing the text file disk to Lansing by the 20th of each month.

The editor (John Nagy) has been in frequent contact with me during this period and informed me of his desire to expand and strengthen the editorial content of the magazine. This could be achieved by increasing the revenues from advertising or by increasing the cost per issue. In fact, the publisher has decided to apply both methods. The maximum charge per issue has been raised to 80 cents. However, a 30% commission will be subtracted from our magazine cost for any advertisements acquired by the club. There is only one month remaining in our contract with State Street Computer, and the commission for this ad is being credited to our costs for the month of April. Therefore, our net costs for April will be roughly 60 cents per issue. Obtaining a second advertiser could reduce costs below the original 50 cent figure.

At the March 10 WAUG meeting, we attempted to describe this situation and present several options to our members. At the rate of 80 cents per issue, our treasury could be easily depleted within 4 months. The first question posed to the membership was to determine how many persons wished to continue receiving MAM. Over half of the members present expressed a strong interest in continued participation with the magazine. The second question asked was whether anyone was willing to help secure advertisements, to gain sales commissions on our behalf. The vote was unamimously negative. Then we circulated a prototype of a new WAUG Newsletter printed by Pattie and Bill Rayl on a 520ST. This was viewed with much interest.

Several important comments were recorded during our group discussion. One member suggested that we should get a guaranteed subscription price for at least one year. Our newsletter editor should be notified prior to deletion or shuffling of news and review articles. We should establish some kind of policy about late arriving copies of MAM. WAUG would like every member to receive a copy before the meeting. Doug has been buying extra copies each month to pass out to members who did not receive a copy by the day of the meeting.

The final decisions were tabled until the April 14 meeting. Here is a summary of some options that we will need to vote on:

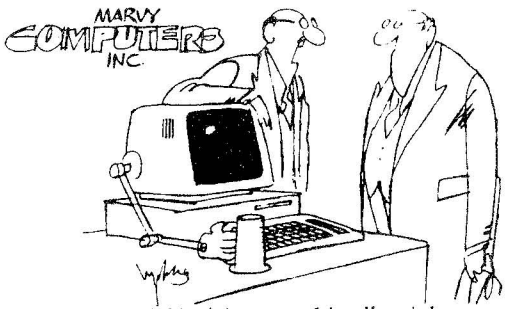
1) To elect a WAUG member responsible for obtaining advertisements for MAM
2) Establish financial incentives for obtaining additional advertising
3) To raise the club membership rate to $18 per year to cover the full cost of MAM subscriptions
4) To charge members on an individual basis for their personal copies of MAM
5) To return to our private publication and mailing of a WAUG newsletter
6) Possible combinations of these ideas

Please try to attend the April 14 meeting to of WAUG to contribute your ideas to these important decisions!

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO WAUG MEMBERS

There will not be any WAUG meetings during the months of July and August. This is due to the closing of Wines School during the summer recess and to the need for R&R by your hard working WAUG officers.

We have decided to require members wishing to receive the July and August issues of MAM, to pay for them on a personal basis. If you wish to receive the July and August issues of MAM, please forward $1.60 to Doug Feldman by June 9, 1987.



"This model isn't just user friendly—it has a drinking buddy function."

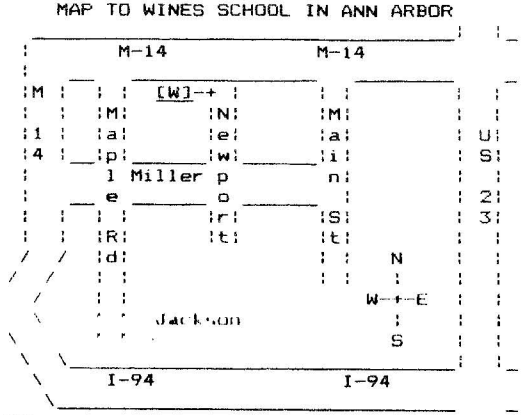
HOW TO JOIN WAUG

Come to a meeting. WAUG memberships are $10.00 for 10 meetings. Renewals are $5.00. WAUG members receive a mailed copy of our newsletter each month and are able to buy disks for $2.00 from our 8-Bit disk library ($5.00 for our new ST library).

HOW TO CONTACT WAUG !!!

WAUG EXPRESS BBS: 313-662-3689 (300 Baud)
CLEAR THINKING BBS: 313-761-2444 (1200/300)
MOLIN'S DEN BBS: 313-420-0407 (1200/300)
By Mail: 4 Hermina Ct. Ann Arbor, MI 48103

MAP TO WINES SCHOOL IN ANN ARBOR



Wines Elementary School is located on Newport Road, just South-West of the M-14 overpass and 50 feet North of the intersection of Newport and Sunset. There is no exit from M-14 at Newport Rd. and no exit from West-bound I-94 to North-bound M-14. From I-94, you can exit at Jackson Ave, go East to Maple and take Maple to Miller. The meetings are held in the spacious teacher's lounge, with a 25 inch color monitor and a handy soda-pop vending machine.

WAUG

WASHTENAW ATARI USERS' GROUP

TRI-CITY ATARI GROUP

T.A.G. - SAGINAW, BAY CITY, MIDLAND

NEXT MEETING

The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the second Saturday of every month at NEXT MEETING

The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the second Saturday of every month at 2:00 pm at the Rudy Zauel Memorial Library on the corner of Shattuck and Center in Saginaw. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows:

April 11th at 2:00 pm.
May 16th at 2:00 pm.

OFFICERS of TAG are as follows:

LeRoy Valley....President/(517)686-6796
Marty Schmidt...Treasurer/Sec./(517)792-6029
Al Jennings...8-bit Disk Lib./(517)790-1980
Lance Middleton...ST Disk Librarian
Ron Hoffman.....Assis. ST Disk Lib.

Club dues are $20.00 per year. For this fee you get the Michigan Atari Magazine, support for both the 8-bits and the ST's, and full access to the club's public domain library. We currently have about 90 disks in the 8-bit library and 30 in the ST library. You can get copies of these disks AT NO CHARGE if you bring your own disk to copy on (time permitting) at the regular meeting. If you don't have a disk with you, you can get the 8- bit disks for $1.00 each and the ST disks for $2.00 each. Non- TAG members can get copies of the 8-bit disks for $2.00 each and the ST disks for $4.00 each. If you need to renew, do it now! If you haven't joined yet, then do it now!

Presidential Address

SPEAKING FROM THE PULPIT...

The March meeting saw the normal spring decline in attendance. I guess everybody doesn't have a year round computer hobby (read ADDICTION) like mine. Sigh. Anyway, on to serious matters. I have just been informed by John Nagy of CHAOS that the cost of the magazine is going up. It will cost the club $0.80 instead of $0.50 per issue. Although I love the Michigan Atari Magazine, it sure seems like a steep increase to me (60% !). We can offset the increase by finding an advertiser (we get 30% of the advertising rate applied to our mailing charges), so I'll see what I can do. We'll be discussing this at the April meeting, so be sure to show up!

HOT FLASHES FROM THE FUTURE

Games. Games! GAMES!! Yes, that's right, we're finally having a pure game meeting again. Not only that, if you show up, you can get a raffle ticket to win one of the two programs that the club purchased. When we left the last meeting, I still hadn't found the Pawn for the 8-bit, so I was told to buy a mystery (????) game. Of course, when I got home and called the dealer, the Pawn had showed up that same day. So the 8-bit game is no longer a mystery. This game is a graphics/adventure program with extremely detailed pictures and a text parser that leaves Infocom and the others in the dust. This fine program will be demoed by Char Davis.

On the ST side, we've got 10th Frame, a good bowling program. The creators of this game actually digitized all of the normal bowling sounds, so it sounds great! Stop by and see Paul Bork demo this excellent sport simulation!

Another ST game to be demoed is Championship Wrestling by Epyx. Dan Barrowman will show off his wrestling prowess with Pile- Drivers, Atomic Drops, and Body Slams! Be there to see the dust shaken from the rafters!!

REMEMBER! 10th Frame and The Pawn will be raffled off at the end of the meeting. Show up and try to win one of these! Raffle tickets are $1.00 each, and you must be a TAG member to purchase them.

****** EXPIRATION NOTICE ******

Remember, once your membership expires you'll only receive three more issues of the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine! Renew your membership now!

RELICS TO RELISH

We had a small turnout at the March meeting, but that didn't dampen the enthusiasm or the quality of the meeting! It was decided that the May meeting would focus on graphic programs that utilized a printer, and that we should have a raffle again! For the May meeting the club will purchase the following packages:

8-bit: News Station
ST: ??????????

We haven't decided yet what to raffle off for the ST, so try to think of something by the April meeting. In May, we will have the following demos:

8 bit: News Station
ST: Publishing Partner

The club decided to start carrying the disk version of ST Log along with the disk version of Analog. Our membership is now nearly half ST'ers, and the difference between Analog with disk and both Analog and ST Log with disk is only $54.00. A lot of members will benefit from this move.

This month's theme was Word Processing, and LeRoy Valley started it out by demoing Haba Writer II (for the ST), by Haba Systems Inc. The WP is a WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) WP. It is capable of displaying light, normal, bold, italics, super and subscripts on screen. It offers true footnoting, a unique "glossary" function that lets you store anything (a phrase, a commonly used word, even printing codes) in a glossary for later retrieval, and all of the standard features like search/replace, cut/paste, and reformat document. All in all, a fine word processor!

Dan Barrowman was next on stage with a demo of Thunder! by Batteries Included. Thunder! is a spelling checker...well, it's actually TWO spelling checkers. You get both a desktop accessory and a stand alone version of the program. The desktop accessory version checks your spelling realtime, while you're typing. If you misspell a word, Thunder! beeps and you can correct it at that point. You can add your own dictionaries, and have them searched automatically, or just use the 80,000 word dictionary included. The stand alone version sports a few more features than the desktop version, and it will work with any file, including files from non-GEM WP's. NOTE: The desktop accessory version does not work with Haba Writer II, but the stand alone works fine!

Moving into the 8-bit section of the meeting, Marty Schmidt showed everyone how good 80 characters can look on an Atari 130XE. With his Omniview chip installed, he had a VERY legible 80 character display on a (dare I say it?) Commodore monitor. Along with the 80 columns, the chip also performs the same service as that of the Atari translator disk!

Marty then showed off the FREE WP that came with Omniview, Speedscript 80. This is a rewrite of the popular Speedscript that appeared in Compute! some time ago. Some new features and, of course, 80 column support, have been added to this version. Marty's premier WP, Letter Perfect, was then displayed in glorious 80 column format. When you purchase Omniview, you get a sheet that explains how to patch Letter Perfect (and Data Perfect) for 80 column support. Letter Perfect is a menu driven WP and, while complicated to learn, is an extremely powerful WP. One of the drawbacks is that the documents aren't stored as standard DOS files, but rather are stored in a custom format. You can purchase the LJK utilities disk to convert the files to standard DOS, so it's not a serious problem. Included with Letter Perfect is Spell Perfect, a companion spelling checker. If you want to avoid a lot of disk swapping, use two disk drives. All in all, it looks like an excellent package.

This concluded our regularly scheduled programming.

*** E B V ***

8-bit Equipment Volunteers:

Al Paquette 800 XL
Gary Grover Disk Drive
Steve Sharp Color TV

ST Equipment Volunteers:

Ron Hoffman Monitor
Paul Bork 520 ST
Dan Barrowman Disk Drive

Once again, a big THANKS to all of you who loan your equipment to the club.

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PS.Interface $23.97	Epyx 500XJ Stick $14.97
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CASCADES ATARI COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS

JACKSON AND SOUTH CENTRAL MICHIGAN

C.ascades A.tari C.omputer E.nthusiasts

C.A.C.E. is the Atari Club in and around the Jackson county area. The main purpose of the club is to help inform new users, and to promote the use of the Atari Computer in the community.

OFFICERS:

President	Harold LaRue	536-4410
Vice-President	Bob Kingsbury	789-7533
Secretary	Joe Cripps	764-0204
Treasurer	Scott Boland	784-9246
Member at Large	Joe Garner	787-1873
Librarian	Bob Kingsbury	789-7533
Meeting Coord.	Brent Fisher	764-9581
P-R Chairman	William Locke	782-6823
Membership Coord.	Scott Boland	784-9246

MEMBERSHIP:

The current membership dues are $10.00 per year, and are payable at any of the C.A.C.E. monthly meetings, or by mail to the P.O.BOX.

Club membership includes access to the entire club software and publication libraries, along with a monthly published newsletter.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Any written communications with C.A.C.E. should be sent to:

C.A.C.E.
P.O. BOX 6161
Jackson, Mich. 49204

MEETINGS:

Our meetings are held on the second Sunday of the month, from 1:00 PM to approx. 4:00 PM.

The meetings take place at the Boos Recreation Center, Loomis Park, 210 Gilbert St., Jackson

Meeting Minutes

This months meeting was a big success, along with the C.A.C.E. Computer Fair. Congratulations to all those who participated. We even had visitors from Toledo and Battle Creek.

At the conclusion of Scott Boland's treasury report, Scott and some of the members identified potential areas for using some of the excess funds. The main emphasis is to support the club. The first area was to purchase some software which would be raffled off at each meeting. The intent was not to provide the club with extra income, but to provide the membership with an additional service. All agreed that this would be a good idea, but that we should wait until later in the year seeing that Attendance at the meetings typically takes a nose dive during the spring and summer. Next Wolfgang Mueller requested that the club purchase a box of disks for the ST library, which was agreed upon. The conversation then switched to providing hardware support for the club librarian (Bob Kingsbury). It was identified that Bob could use a computer so he would not have to tear down his system and bring it to the meetings and could save some wear and tear on his equipment. Suggestions were made for other components, i.e. disk drive, disk drive enhancement, monitor. Also, to assist Bob, it was recommended that we consider providing Bob with some financial backing to defer the cost of his private computer line and the many calls that he has made to obtain software for the club. Finally it was proposed that an MIO Board be purchased for Harold LaRue's BBS. Harold stated that he would purchase a hard disk drive for the board if the club would purchase the MIO Board. A resolution was passed to have the board develop a proposal, before the next meeting, for the above equipment. This proposal will be put to a vote of the members at the meeting. This will be an important vote, taking into account the dollar

value of these expenditures, so your attendance at the next meeting is important.

The new users SIG(Special Interest Group) was restarted again during the meeting. This group will meet at every meeting and at other times during the month as the need is demonstrated. It should be noted that this is an excellent way for new users of Atari Computers to learn about their machines.

Brent Fisher brought in an example of a shirt which a friend of his could supply to the club membership for approx. $4.00. The shirts are very nice and especially for the price. Discussion of the shirts revolved around what exactly should be imprinted on the shirt. Brent was requested to obtain a firm price and to develop a layout for the shirt. The club membership will vote on the final layout and orders will be taken at the next meeting.

Bill Locke noted to the membership that he has submitted the club information to ANTIC and Atari Explorer. Also, he is pursuing ads for Michigan Atari Magazine with potentially two groups who are interested in taking out ads. This is great, but Bill and our news letter could use more support in this area. So, keep your eyes and ears open for potential advertisers.

TREASURY REPORT

by Scott Boland

As of March 18th, 1987 the C.A.C.E. treasury has $594.65 in the bank account and $153.55 in petty cash. This gives the treasury a grand total of $748.20.

I would like to thank all of the members who donated their time and equipment to the computer faire we held at Westwood Mall. In my opinion the faire was a success, especially being our first attempt. We had eight new members join the club during the faire and received $53.00 in disk copy fees for our public domain disk library.

I would like to welcome nine new members to our club. They are: Craig Schaff, Eric Vincent, Paul Bayzlewicz, David Drew, Bob Ward, David LaHote, Anthony Beveridge, Juan Paez, and Bill Blakley. Please consider ways that you can contribute to the club, as well as ways the club can help you.

I have received brochures from Atari Corporation about GENIE, the telecommunications network from General Electric. GENIE has waived their normal $18.00 signup charge to ATARI users for a limited time. As I have a limited number of pamphlets, please call me about their availability. GENIE has the lowest per hour rate ($5.00) that I know of.

I have one last subject to cover. I have been informed by John Nagy of C.H.A.O.S. that the newletter cost to member clubs has been increased. The rate has been increased from $.50 per member per month to $.80 per member per month. This brings the yearly charge per member to $9.60 for the newsletter. This is only $.40 less than our yearly dues. John also informed me that any advertising that we send in to the newsletter, out club gets to keep 30% of the advertising fees. This should help to offset the price increase. Please try to attend the April meeting, as we have much to discuss. Thank you, see you in April.

Meetings

Coordination Corner
by Brent Fisher

Well I'd like to welcome you all once again to another Coordination Corner and to start off I'd like to say that I'm sorry that I didn't get this out in time last month but I have definite plans to do so this time. I suppose to start off I'd like to thank everyone from the month before, so to begin I'd like to thank Jimmie Boyce for the use of his monitor, John Charles for the use of his computer, Donald Elliott for the use of his disk drive, Joe Garner for the use of his computer, Bill Howland for the use of his disk drive, and last but not least Dick Kuhn for the use of his moniter.

Well how is that for a long list. As for demonstrations, a bit of thanks to William Locke for some demos of some of the type-in programs from Analog and Antic, Harold LaRue for allowing us to see Hardball one more time, and Harold again for showing us Karate Kid II for the ST's.

And for this last month I'll start off thanking Robert Towbridge for bringing his moniter and disk drive, Joe Cripps for his computer and disk drive, and Paul Babcock for his computer and disk drive.

One demo for next month that I'm pretty certain that we'll have is the Antic voice circuit, and possibly another sound demonstration.

Well I suppose that that's that for this month, if anyone has any comments, suggestions, (good or bad, I mean I can't know unless someone says something to me) or would like to demo something be it hardware or software just give me a call, or leave some E-mail to me on one of the local BBS's.

Disk Library

Librarian's Report
By Bob Kingsbury

Here it is time again to get ready for the next news letter and meeting. As many of you know our computer fair was a big success. We gained some new members and alot of exposure in the community.

The library continues to grow faster than I can keep up with it. With the help of a couple of assistance this will not be a problem much longer. The new type of listing seems to be well received and easier to use. If you have some input on the new listing system please let me know at the next meeting. As for the listing, a new updated one will be at the April meeting.

DON'T MISS THE APRIL MEETING

There are some important things that need your input and attendance. Number one is the 60% increase we now pay for this news letter. Do we need it or should we go back to publishing our own or except other offers to combine news letters with other groups. Second is the purchase of more hardware for the club. This and more are reasons way you should not miss APRIL'S meeting. The money we spend on news letters and hardware is yours, so be there to have a say in how it is used.

At the next meeting I will show the installation of a write protect switch for the 1050 drives. This will be done without any cutting or drilling to your drive case.

See you in APRIL

Alisa Hickey

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GKAUG ATARI GREATER KALAMAZOO ATARI USERS GROUP

Presidential Address

By: Daniel Youngs
616-388-3164

We had a good group to our last meeting. Its seems that we may have picked up a few new members at our computer fair. This something that we need, new members, people with new idea's and input. The March meeting was on Money and Business and everyone seemed to get something out of it.

The old business:

We are working on the BBS and have started to order our hardware and software. We need a SYSOP, this person needs to be someone with a local phone (we would provide an extra phone line and pay the monthly bill). We will teach you what you need to know to run it, if you think that this is something that might interest you then please give me a call.

We had several people sign up for MULE so we will start play at the April meeting.

(Players will be David Altoft, Kurt Grooman, Steve Haddix, Gus Guzinski, the top two winners will play Maggi Connell, and John Staley if there's time).

The news letter price has increased from .50 to .80 and any ads that we can get we will get commission of them.

Steven has just about got our library done so that we should have it at the next meeting.

Remember that the next meeting the theme will be baseball so bring all your baseball games we will be demonstrating some of the latest ones.

The disk of the month will be good strategy games so bring your $2.00

We hope to have our Analog disks at the next meeting. For some reason they don't seem to want to send them out.

Dues are $20.00 per year and this entitles the member to one years subscription to our news letter and accesses to the clubs library. Meetings are the second Sat of each month (April 9, 1987) at Dewing hall Kalamazoo College starting at 2:00.

Disk Library

THE LIBRARIAN REPORT
By: STEPHEN BUECHLER

I am still working on the library, but hopefully I will have it ready for the April meeting. The disks will have directories on the disk jackets and will be arranged in the disk boxes by category. I still need a program to list out all the programs in the library to my printer. If anyone out there has a good program that would do this, give me a call at 616-323-9573. I have found a couple user groups that we are the process of trading with and will have new programs to mix in with our old ones to bring new life to our club disk library. Don't forget, if any of you have any programs that you think are good and would like to put them in our club library, call me at the number above.

Another month gone by!

Last months Finance disk seemed to be a hit! At the next meeting, I hope to have 5 disks available. We have 2 printshop icon disks, Analog 52, a game disk, and a disk with the Archiver utility, which compresses files into a much smaller space. This saves time when sending files over modem, and saves space when storing them for backup.

Dave Oldenberg
(616)435-8263

Atari ST News

Information about the ST Transformer
as of 03/09/87

By Darek Mihocka (CIS 73657,2714)

Programmed by Darek Mihocka
Additional programming and all night testing by
Ignac Kolenko
Hardware supplied by:

Xanth Computer Systems
600 First Avenue
Seattle, Washington

The purpose of this document about the ST Transformer is: - to explain its purpose and give a history of its development - to give the latest information about the ST Transformer - to discuss the legal problems with this program and why I can't release it to the public for all former Atari 400/800 owners - to find other programmers to work on this project.

For those of you unfamiliar with the name, you have seen it as the Atari 800 Emulator Demo or the Apple II Emulator.

Part 1:The history

When Atari introduced the ST computers, I was then the owner of an Atari 400, bought way back in 1981 with all my summer's earnings. Like many other people I spent a considerable amount of money on my system for software and disk drives. About the only piece of hardware that I could use on the ST was my FX80 printer. This is not too useful as none of the software works. So I held off buying an ST for over a year as I waited for Atari to introduce some kind of a device or program to allow me to run old software. They never did. I finally sold the 400 and bought the ST anyway because after using 68000 based in machines at my university, I was impressed by its power and already had a program in mind.

The implementation: The first project I decided to work on was to somehow run the old software so that all that money didn't all go to waste. I considered 2 approaches:

- the first approach is to write a program that reads a binary file from a 400/800 and convert each machine language instruction into a 68000 instruction. This would then create a file on the ST that would run about 10 times the speed of the original file!

Problems: - how do you tell the difference between code and data? - how to handle self modifying code? - how to handle the hardware registers?

- the second approach is to write an interpreter, similar to the way BASIC interprets a tokenized program, or the way that a real microprocessor executes code. You read in a byte of memory, determine which 6502 instruction it is, and execute it. The real 6502 executes microcode. I would use 68000 instructions.

Problems: - the overhead of processing each instruction is greater than the time it takes to actually execute it.
- how to handle hardware registers?

I chose the second approach because it solves the first two problems of the first approach, and shares the third problem. The problem of speed is also in both approaches. Software running at ten times the speed is usually unusable. This is similar to the problem when some IBM PC software is run on an AT or even worse, a Compaq 386 (18 times faster). It is always possible to use software running slower. The unknown is how slow the software would run. The hardware problem can be solved by a similar interpreter which checks which register is being accessed and does something accordingly.

First results:

The first version of the 6502 interpreter was written in Megamax C in August. As it turned out, the unknown speed was about 7% of the speed of a real 6502. This does not include the extra interpretation of hardware. It was obvious that hand coded 68000 code was needed. About a month later, I had the hand coded version sort of working at about 30% of the speed. To make the hardware interpreter would be difficult, because of the dozens of hardware locations in a 400/800. I chose then to first do an Apple II hardware emulator, because there are only 2 vital locations needed to get it to work: the keyboard and the screen. The next month was spent debugging the many bugs that crept into the 6502 interpreter and porting software from . Finally it worked, at about 25% of the speed.

This is the version that you have seen as the Apple II emulator.

First Problems:

One problem with all emulators is inherent in their design: to emulate the software of another machine, you must transfer that software. When I approached Apple about this, they told me that what I am doing is illegal,

since I copied the ROMs of Ignac's no name IC clone, which had ROMs probably derived from an Apple. I approached Apple Canada about getting the real ROMs from them, plus the code for Apple DOS, and anything else they'd want to let me try. As it turned out, they saw my project as software piracy and told me to forget it. I guess they didn't want to expand to the ST market anyway. After the Apple told me they weren't interested, I decided to stop spending more time on Apple emulation. I ported over my copy of the Translator disk's image of the Revision B ROMs. I chose those ROMs because they are made to run with 64K of RAM, which is what the 6502 interpreter sees when it is executing. I also ported a copy of Atari Basic to use as a test file. After only a few days of hacking the Apple IC routines, I got a very primitive version of the Atari emulator working. It only supported a few graphics modes and still had a major 6502 bug, but it sort of worked. I uploaded it to my BBS and to Atari's BBS as the Atari 800 Emulator Demo.

Part 2: the Atari 800 emulator

What happened then was a big shock. I got a phone call from one of the Atari BBS sysops telling me that Atari was not pleased with what I had done. They too considered my program as piracy. I was told that I would be contacted within a few days to discuss the emulator. No one ever called back, and I have never been able to get through to anyone that would discuss it with me. The secretaries usually screwed me around on the phone. Attempts to reach someone willing to talk on Compuserve also failed.

What I currently have is a program that appears to execute 6502 code according to the 6502 specs at about 20% of the speed. This includes the overhead of the hardware interpreter. The hardware supported so far includes:

- graphics modes 0,1,2,3,6,6+,7,7+,and 8 - most display lists, no matter how complex - most keyboard keys, including START, SELECT, OPTION, RESET, caps, inverse, and BREAK. - the color registers, and a few other miscellaneous locations - most read and write DOS operations - 1 joystick port - printer output - Runs most BASIC software I've downloaded from BBSs and tested.

Not supported yet:

- GTIA modes - player missle graphics - sound registers - a combination of the two mentioned approaches, where parts of the operation system are hand coded to 68000 code and executed directly, not interpreted. This is already done for the D: and P: drivers, but I plan to eventually do the whole operating system which would result in a significant speed increase.

Part 3: Legal Problems

According to Apple and Atari, it is illegal for me to distribute the emulator any more because I had included the ROMs with the demos. That is the reason I have not released anything in over 2 months. I respect their legal right, but I also believe that Atari has an obligation to all the tens of thousands of 8 bit owners who helped build the Atari empire. The only people who can make a perfectly legal emulator are Atari themselves. I have spent about 500 hours of my time planning, programming, and testing my program. This may seem like a lot, but it works out to about 10 weeks of full time work, or about 2 to 3 weeks work for a team of Microsoft caliber programmers, which I assume Atari has. With their technical knowledge of both the 8 bit and the ST computers, I don't see why Atari couldn't have released an fully implemented emulator 18 months ago. They were quick to introduce the CP/M emulator. I've compared the code of my program and theirs, and it is quite similar. So they are half done already. Until they do, I will keep working on my program until it is functional enough to run most software that can be downloaded. Once released, it will be up the individual users to copy their ROMs over to the ST. Atari says that's illegal. For as long as the people do it for their own use, I do not see this as being illegal. I do not have access to high priced lawyers, so I am hoping that Atari will finally talk to me and come to an agreement that will benefit us all.

Part 4: Programmers Wanted

Most of the emulator is written in 68000 code, with C code handling the less critical routines. It has been suggested that I write my program for the Amiga, because its superior graphics would make it easier to implement player missle graphics and the other features. Since I have never programmed the Amiga, I cannot make the Amiga version. What I would also like to do is write hardware emulators for other computers, like the Commodore 64, VIC 20, Color Computer, Sinclair, etc. Anyone proficient in 68000 programming that would be interested in writing those modules starting sometime next fall or winter should contact me.

Until then, keep an eye out on your local BBS for the ST Transformer which I hope to have released in June. I will update the situation on the board I hang out on, Megabaud 416-243-9519. Anyone having any suggestions on the program or who can help me with the legal questions can reach me on Compuserve or write to me (before May 1, 1987) at 5023 148th Ave. N.E. #6207, Bellevue, Washington.

Industry Report

The Allentown Atari-Fest
By Jerry Cross (G.A.G.)

Although there was not a lot of new products shown at the Allentown show, I did find a few interesting things.

But first, lets cover all of the rumors, and updates on Atari products. At the first seminar held on Saturday, Mark Jenson, Technical Support Specialist for Atari, fielded questions from a hardware-hungry crowd.

*XEP80 (80-column card) is finished and has been sent to the manufacturing folks. Price is expected to be $79.95, and will be on the store shelves by summer.

*AtariWriter and Silent Butler have been modified to work with the 80-column card, and will be ready at the same time the card hits the stores.

*SX212 Modem (1200 baud)-More work is being done. No release date has been set. I will go into this a bit later.

*Atari PC Clone Computers are still planned, and Atari hopes to have them ready by summer. They will come with EGA mode and SmartMono, and are expected to sell for $699. There were rumors that the Atari PC was now being sold in Europe, but Neil Harris stated this was not true. He figures there is confusion between the Atari and Commodore versions (Commodore has a PC clone currently available in Europe). Not much comments about the FCC problems or licensing troubles though.

*MEGA ST is still being worked on. Plans are for 1- 2- and 4-meg versions, each will include the Blitter chip. Expect to see this by June (according to Neil)

*Blitter Chip is complete, but work still needs to be done on the operating system to support it.

*The Laser Printer is planned to be released this summer at a cost of $1500. With the cost of the ST-MEG, you can now have an excellent system for around $3000!

*SH205 Hard Drive-Not much news. Work is being done to make this drive daisy-chainable, and may be what's holding things up.

*GDOS has been finished and is currently being shipped to developers.

*The Atari Game Machine will be available in June. Atari expects this to be a huge success, and hopes this will be a major source for 8-bit software. No other information was available.

*AMY chip-Yes, it's still being worked on. It seems there was a working version that was put together on a breadboard, but their engineers could not put it into silicone. It's back to the drawing board.

*3 1/2" Drive (8-Bit). HUH? What 3.5 drive? Oh, yeah, that one. Well, it has been put on hold, and according to Neil, if he has his way it will never be released! Even though Sparta-dos has added support for this drive in their Sparta-Dos X cartridge, and OSS has done lots of work on a new DOS, Atari feels there is not enough demand for this drive. I guess us poor 8-bitters have no use for a drive that holds 300k.....YEAH, SURE!!!!!

In other news, Neil Harris stated Atari plans to launch more TV commercials this summer. Also expect to see Atari very prominently on Genie.

Now for the bad news. The 1200 baud modem still has some work needed before it can be released. Rumor has it that the problem is with the compatibility with the 8-bit interface. I have heard rumors about this before, so I questioned Neil about it.

Atari decided to create an all new interface that is compatible with.....NOTHING! They will include a handler with the modem, and Keith Ledbetter is updating his excellent terminal program (EXPRESS!) to support the new handler. Count your blessings, it could have been XE-TERM.

OTHER VENDORS

Disk Of the Month attended, and was selling loads of software at 30% off retail. They are a national mail-order company and will beat any price.

Static Engineering was showing a product called FUNCTION AID. This product is a clear plastic template holder that sits above your function keyes. You can now figure out what all those keys do by simply looking at the card. It's a nidea, but for $28.95 I think you can figure out a better way.

Diverse Data Products showed off two new products. MFD-720 is a double-sided drive for the Atari ST. It features a heavy-duty metal housing, internal power supply, and an on/off switch located on the front for easier reach. The price is $249.95. I picked up one of them, so I'll have a review of it in the near future. Also shown was a 1-meg upgrade kit. Since I just purchased an ST I'm not up on these

Here are a few thoughts on YEMACYB.

"..., the results have been very satisfactory. Quite frankly, much better than what I had hoped for."
Robert J. Sarna, Northbrook IL

"AMAZING printouts"
John D. Leasia, P.E., Royal Oak MI

"I am very pleased with the software package. It saved me over $200!"
David C. White, OSTERHOLZ HIGH SCHOOL, APO NY

"excellent...very enjoyable and rewarding"
Stanley M. Siembor, Inkster MI

"sharper and more soild than a typical Okimate printout"
Jeff Brenner, COMPUTER SHOPPER

"I think it is a great product"
Thomas D. Iowa, Littleton CO

"a really satisfying piece of software that's also easy to use"
Frank E. Kweder, Ft. Meyers FL

"a great addition to my collection."
Nick Callas, Lincolnshire IL

"You may not know it yet, but you need this software."
Michael L. Clayton, Rochester MI

"have been very pleased with it. It is one of the BEST printer utilities to come out for the ATARI computer in a long time."
Thomas M. Dewar II, Astoria NY

"I LOVE IT!"
Susan Johnson, Highland UT

"I was real impressed with my first picture, and it got easier with my second picture."
James L. Thompson, Battle Creek MI

"I find the printing program 'GREAT'..."
Clifford O. Gross, San Antonio TX

"What the HECK is a YEMACYB?"
Jeffery A. Case, Nattydale NY

"YEMACYB is a funny name for a very powerful color screen dump by ELECTRONICAL SOFTWARE."
Dr. Roland B. Herman, W.A.N.D. Newsletter, White Plains NY

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(Michigan residents please add 4% sales tax)

hardware upgrades, so I'm not sure if this is a bargain or not. The sales info states you do not need to add a larger power supply, and requires 3 solder connections. Some of the more experienced folks I talked to were quite impressed.

Timeworks showed their line of business application/productivity programs. Demonstrated were such programs as Word Writer, DataManager, and others.

Astra Systems was showing their new hard drive for the ST. Called the System HD+, this 20-meg drive features a built-in 3.5 Double Sided drive, built in power supply, and very small footprint (5 1/4 x 4 1/4 x 12). Included in the $999 price is BRS, a backup and restore program. This drive was left on from Friday night until Sunday afternoon, and never felt warm when you touched it!

Astra also showed their new 8-bit drive "THE ONE". This drive features single/double density and is double sided (software selectable). It is also the first drive to feature a direct drive motor. It also has a built in printer interface! Total storage capacity is 360k. I found this a very nice drive for people looking to increase their storage but not wanting to buy a hard drive. It also comes with a free copy of TOPDOS.

Disk Publications (the folks that bring you Aladdin Disk-Magazine) was there to show off their ST version of Aladdin. They also announced plans for an Amiga version for those poor soles who took the wrong path (eh?).

Atari Explorer sold some of their past issues, and sold subscriptions at a discounted rate. I finally broke down and bought one.

Cal Com brought a load of hardware and Software. They are a local dealer but do some mail-order sales also. From the looks of the crowd that was always packed at their table, I guess they did a lot of business.

MicroDraft, the maker of CHIPMUNK software, had a table set up and were demonstrating their product.

Shelbourne Software was showing their ST Pool game, and the Shuffleboard game, both of which were at the Pittsburgh show. Nothing new here.

Alpha Systems showed their new Color ComputerEyes. Brand new was a cartridge based 520k Ramdisk for the ST. This cart plugs into any ST and allows you to quickly access additional ram. You can not use it as programmable ram however. One advantage is if you own a 520 or 1040 ST and plan to upgrade to the 1 meg ST, you can use this "Ramcart" on those machines too. The cost is $199.

Progressive Computer Applications had a number of desktop publishing programs on display, such as The Graphic Artist. This is advertised to be the first program to combine desktop publishing and computer aided design in a single environment. Some of the sample pictures were fantastic!

White Lion Software, located in New York, showed a wide range of programs and support disks for TypeSetter. Their newest program, QIX-PIX was getting a lot of attention, not to mention their Graphic Libraries. Folks who are having problems understanding TypeSetter may want to look at the tutorials on these disks.

Michtron was demonstrating their new picture digitizer (much like Computereyes) for the ST. Called the REALTIZAR, this device takes your picture in just 5 seconds! They also demonstrated many of their game programs such as Karate Kid II and Space Shuttle.

Hybrid Arts was the hit of the show. In addition to their demonstrations of midi hardware and software, they also helped to put on the worlds first MIDI-MAZE tournament! For more information, check out the article located elsewhere in this newsletter.

Current Notes made their first appearance at an AtariFest, and was selling subscriptions to their magazine, and also some ST library disks.

Quantum Microsystems showed their line of ST products, such as Deskcart, an accessory cartridge that adds 14 more functions and utilities. These products were shown at previous shows, and QMI had no new products.

J&S Computers, Computer Games, and Royal Software were also there to represent the local dealers.

Stone Age Software had a couple of interesting programs available. Encrypt takes any data, text, or program and encrypts the program to prevent unauthorized access. They are so sure of it's reliability they are offering a reward for the first person to crack their system. Other programs shown included a chemistry spreadsheet (oh boy!).

Best Products brought along their usual line of odd-ball, and hard to find Atari hardware parts. They also had several interesting collector items for sale, like a brass Atari-logo paperweight.

Sense Software showed a new program called DBSENSE. This is a text-based relational database program with it's own programming language and word processor. This was WAY over my puny 8-bit head, but Bill Wilkinson was really impressed with it.

Analog, which has been supporting the AtariFest movement all along, had their table set up, and had a few surprises too. Right off the presses was their latest Analog magazine, and a new book/magazine called "An Atari 8-bit Extra". This is a collection of never before published articles, programs, and tutorials. Expect to see it on the bookshelves real soon.

So ends another AtariFest. It appears that about 2000 Atari fans passed through the show, and the dealers stated they sold a lot of merchandise.

The next show (close to Michigan) will be held in Buffalo in April. The Michigan Atari General Information Conference (MAGIC) also plans to host an AtariFest on August 29-31 at the Southfield Hilton hotel. Another show within driving distance will be held in Chicago, sometime in July. No other information is available at this time.

These shows are a lot of fun. There are seminars held regularly during the show, door prizes, refreshments, and all sorts of happenings. Plan to attend a show near you!

Atari News

SCHEDULED ATARI FAIRS

APRIL 1987
Salt Lake City, UT
Fri 04/10/87, Sat 04/11/87
Sponsor: ACE of Salt Lake
Contact: Chris Christopolus
(801) 486-8009
P.O. Box 26664, Salt Lake City, UT 84126

APRIL 1987
Buffalo Convention Center - Buffalo, NY
Sat 04/25/87, Sun 04/26/87
Sponsor: Western New York Atari User Group
Contact: Bill Beerbower (716) 875-6555
P.O. Box 59, Buffalo, NY 14216

MAY 1987
Infomart - Dallas, TX
Fri 05/08/87, Sat 05/09/87
Sponsor: DAL-ACE, North Texas ST Users
Contact: Bill Bailey (214) 240-4337
4834 Collingwood, Garland, TX 75043

MAY 1987
Seattle Center, FLAG Pavillion - Seattle, WA
Sat 05/16/87, Sun 05/17/87
Sponsor: 5 local user groups
Contact: Bruce Noonan (206)
775-0545/745-2867
21700 76 Ave. West, Edmonds, WA 98020

JUNE 1987

JULY 1987
Ramada Hotel O'Hare - Rosemont, IL
Sat 07/25/87, Sun 07/26/87
Sponsor: Consortium of local user groups including SCAT, LCACE & CL.A.U.G.
Contact: Rich Bollmeier (312) 662-8676
2928 Brookside, Waukegan, IL 60085

AUGUST 1987
Detroit, MI -- Details forthcoming

SEPTEMBER 1987
Glendale Civic Auditorium - Glendale, CA
Sat 09/19/87, Sun 09/20/87
Sponsor: ACENET
Contact: John King Tarpinian
(818) 760-1831
6055 Cahuenga Blvd. #2,
N. Hollywood, CA 91606

SEPTEMBER 1987
Worcester Centrum - Worcester, MA
Sat 09/26/87, Sun 09/27/87 - tentative
Sponsor: Boston Computer Society
Alan Glick (617) 296-8286
1 Center Plaza, Boston, MA 02108

OCTOBER 1987
Washington D. C. - facility not determined
Sat 10/17/87
Sponsor: NOVATARI
Contact: Joe Waters (703) 450-4761
122 N. Johnson Rd., Sterling, VA 22170

NOVEMBER 1987
Palm Beach, FL - facility not determined
Sat 11/21/87, Sun 11/22/87
Sponsor: Atari Club of the Palm Beaches
Contact: Jim Woodward (305) 736-5532
605 S.W. 1st Court,
Boynton Beach, FL 33435

NOVEMBER 1987
San Jose, CA - facility not determined

For further information contact; Sandi Austin, Atari Corp, 1196 Borregas Ave, Sunnyvale, CA 94086, (408) 745-2012.

Review

The Worlds First MIDI-MAZE Tournament!

By Jerry Cross (G.A.G.)

I hate kids! Well, not all kids. The small ones that can't handle a joystick are OK (I guess). But those other ones...

Like that little 10-year old girl standing in front of me in line at the MIDI-MAZE game. She

had blond hair, a cute red dress, and a ribbon in her hair. All she did was giggle!

She looked up at me and gave me this cute little smile. But I knew she was just trying to mess with my mind, trying to psych me out. I put on my best Dirty Harry face and growled at her! She just giggled some more and took her place behind an ST computer.

We are about to compete in the Worlds First Midi-Maze contest. Midi-Maze was written by Xanth Software, and is being distributed by Hybrid Arts, the folks who have all that midi-music stuff. And no wonder, since this game uses the midi jack on the ST to allow up to 16 computers to be connected to each other, thus allowing 16 players to compete at once!

Hybrid Arts, along with Casio, have donated a Casio synthesizer, plus software, valued at over $800, to be given away as first prize. So this was a serious contest, with lots of eager players were waiting their chance to play. This was no place for kids! (Geez, does she have to giggle all the time?)

Suddenly, the game begins. I start dashing around the maze, and soon sneak up on an unsuspecting player. Two quick shots and he disappears!

Midi-Maze is sort of like PAC-MAN. You are in control of a round balloon shaped ball with a Happy-Face painted on it. If the Happy-Face is looking at you, then you know your opponent can see you too. It's possible to sneak up on another player when his back is turned, then shoot-em in the back.

You are placed in a 3D maze, and all you see are the walls. The object of the game is to move your player around the maze looking for other players. By pressing the joystick button, you launch a round ball of energy at your opponent. With a satisfying popping sound, you know you have hit your mark.

I'm in the lead now, but the green player is right behind me. I turn the corner and blast another poor Happy-Face.

The screen is divided into three sections. The larger portion contains the actual maze. You are given a "rats-eye" view of the maze, so all you see are long hallways and walls. the upper corner contains the status chart. As you kill an opponent, your "marker" moves up the chart to the top. You are also shown the status of all the other players. The first person to kill 10 Happy-Face's wins the game. Thus the more popular name for this game "Kill a Happy-Face".

Near the side of the screen is a list of players you killed. This is not really needed, just something to fill up the screen, I guess.

It looks like a two way race now between me and the green Happy-Face! Just then I hear this giggle. I peek over at the kid and notice that she is putting on a glove. Not just any glove....this was a custom-made, patent-leather, joystick glove! And I notice on her screen that SHE is the green player!

"Hey Ref, look at that" I screamed, pointing at her hand.

"Nothing in the rules about that" , he says, with this big grin on his face.

OK, this kid is dead meat! NO MERCY! I just hope she doesn't go crying to her mother when....

Just then a green energy ball shoots past my face, missing me by just inches! I spin around and dash down a hallway, around a corner....right into a dead end alley! I turn around just in time this green Happy-Face come around the corner with guns blasting. I didn't last long.

Then I here this giggle again. I look down and she is giving me this big snot-eating winners grin. Then she giggles some more and runs off to find her mother. I make a silent promise that from now on I would drive over every bicycle I find parked too close to the street!

Fighting back tears, I went searching for Frank Foster, President of Hybrid Arts, to get some more information about the game. It seems the maze we are currently playing on was designed by Neil Harris. Neil snuck into an early round of the tournament and plastered everyone! The players just kept mumbling "Who is that guy?" (No kidding!) Neil has played this game at other AtariFests, and has lots of experience at it.

Frank stated that Midi-Maze will soon be released (April 1) for $39.95. Although it is much more fun to hook up 16 ST's, you can still use this with one. The computer can play with up 16 computer-controlled players. Adding other ST's is very simple to do too.

It also was rumored that there would be an 800 number available so you could call up and play against other players, (This was even printed in the local newspaper!) But Frank stated that was not true. The maze itself can be designed by the player by simple creating a new data file. The one being used on the tournament was designed to have some wide-open areas for a free-for-all type battle, and a few long hallways for the braver players.

Anyway, this game was a huge success, and Hybrid Arts plans to have it at most of the other AtariFests around the country. He plans to bring it to the Detroit show in August too.

Well, after a long day looking at booths, and playing several more games of Midi-Maze, I finally decided to head back to my hotel room. But first I wanted to stop at the Analog booth to get one of their latest Analog magazines. As I walked up to the booth, the man said "Sorry, I just gave the last copy out".

Just then I here this giggle. I look down to see that same blond kid with the red dress and the ribbon in her hair reading the LAST copy of Analog. She looks up and gives me that same snot-eating grin, then goes back to reading the magazine.

"You wouldn't happen to own a bicycle, would you?" I asked.

Software

NEEDED: HELP WITH SYNCALC
Tom Siemietkowski (DCCUG)

I have been at the keyboard for many hours the past couple of weeks working on a GOLF SCOREKEEPER for our golf league. This will include the individual weekly scores and summary for each individual and a totalization of team standings. At first this didn't sound too complicated but as things progressed and more variables surfaced I became glued to my computer.

We have individual matches to total and calculate-playing match and medal together, then combine these for team totals with handicaps, and to top that off we are a traveling league so we don't play the same course twice. What did you say LOTS OF LUCK ?

I have only worked with SYN-CALC on one other occasion and that was out of a book for a tax spreadsheet. It is a lot easier than programming but hard to get used to their commands and how to manipulate them to come up with the results you are after. Hope to have a demonstration by next meeting.

If there are any of you out there in Michigan land who are familiar with SYN-CALC and know of articles or books on SYN-CALC and its usage I can use all the help I can get.

ST

ST NOTES
by LeRoy Valley (TAG)

How many of you have those nice double sided drives that can hold up to 828K, and yet you still have all of your protected software on the original single sided disks? A lot of you? Well, this month I'm going to show you how to convert many of them over to double sided format.

My primary tool to accomplish this task is Procopy, a backup program available from most dealers for about $30 (or directly from Proco Products for $34.95). Why Procopy, you might ask. Very simply: 1) Procopy backs up every piece of software that I've ever tried it on and... 2) Procopy has a nice feature called ANALYZE (more about this later).

The current version of Procopy that I'm using is 1.32. In order to accomplish the task which we've laid out for ourselves, we need to keep in mind the following conditions: * The disk which we are converting MUST have files on it visible from GEM. In other words, we can't convert a program like Time Bandits to a double sided disk. * The disk must be copyable using Procopy. * NEVER work on the original disk! * We need to determine where the protection is on the original disk.

Our first order of business is to determine exactly where the protection is on the original disk. We do this by using the ANALYZE feature of Procopy. ANALYZE looks at each track and then reports whether the track is standard, or has been modified (protected) in some way. The following is a sample listing from an ANALYZE run:

```
TRACK 4D
4D 00 01 02        4D 00 02 02        4D 00 03 02
4D 00 04 02        4D 00 05 02        4D 00 06 02
4D 00 07 02        4D 00 08 02        4D 00 09 02

TRACK 4E
4E 00 01 02        4E 00 02 02        4E 00 03 02
4E 00 04 02        4E 00 05 02        4E 00 06 02
4E 00 07 02        4E 00 08 02        4E 00 09 02
4E 00 0A 02

TRACK 4F
4F 00 01 02        4F 00 06 02        4F 00 02 02
4F 00 07 02        4F 00 03 02        4F 00 08 02
4F 00 04 02        4F 00 43 02 crc    4F 00 09 02
4F 00 05 02 shr    4F 00 21 02        4F 00 2C 02

TRACK 50 ***UNFORMATTED***
```

First, lets explain what all of those numbers mean. The first two digits are the track number, the second two are the side number (0 and 1 for a double sided disk), the third two are the actual sector number, and the last two are a status bit (02 is normal, anything else is modified or a problem). If anything is written next to the track, we have definitely found either a protected track, or a damaged one.

Looking at what we have in the sample, track 4D is a standard TOS formatted track with 9 sectors, numbered 1-9. Track 4E is a standard formatted track with 10 sectors (many of the new formatting programs use 10 sectors/track), numbered 1-A. Track 4F is definitely a protected track, sporting 12 sectors, a crc (damaged sector) error, an shr (overwritten header) sector, and on top of all that, the sector number are all jumbled! Track 50 is simply an unformatted track.

After analyzing the disk (make sure that you analyze all 82 tracks), look for anything unusual, like track 4F above. Generally, protected tracks appear at track 4F. If the protected track is at 4F, then the conversion is easy. Convert the disk as follows:

1) Format a disk double sided (using either 9 or 10 sectors/track).

2) Copy all of the files from the original disk to the new double sided disk.

3) Now comes the tricky part -- copy the protected track from the original disk to the double sided disk. Use the arrow keys to set both the begin and end tracks to the number of the protected track. If it's 4F, that number will be 80. The analyzer runs from track 0 to 51 hex, or 0 to 81 decimal. The copy program does not start at 0, but rather at 1 and is in decimal. After copying track 80 (normally you should also copy tracks 81 and 82 also) from the original to the double sided disk, use analyze on the new track(s) to verify that they are exactly like the original. If it is, then you should now have a copy of your original disk on a double sided disk (with a whole lot of room left over) and best of all, it should run!!

That was the easy situation, because the protected track was at the end of the disk, and we didn't have to worry about it. What if the track is at track 2, though? Now we have to contend with a bad track in the middle of our data. Since it's bad, we don't ever want to write there (or we might see those cute little bombs), so how do we insure that we won't?

OK, take a deep breath, and here we go... Every sector holds 512 bytes. So if we formatted the disk at 10 sectors/track we get 512 bytes * 10 sectors * 2 sides = 10K/track. Thus (allowing a little for the FAT table) if the protected track is 02, we should run into it about 17K into the disk. We simply write a small file (or files) to the disk insuring that we use enough files to cover the entire track 02, then copy the protected track over these files, then rename these files (which we've just damaged by copying a damaged track onto them) to something obvious like BAD1.XXX, BAD2.XXX, etc. If you're not sure which files are damaged, try copying the files to another disk. GEM will tell you which ones are damaged.

Now we have a double sided disk with one or two files called BAD.XXX. All we have to do is copy all of the files off of the original to the double sided disk, and voila, we should have a working copy. If you want to get elegant, use a disk utility like Michtron Utilities to change the attributes of the damaged files to HIDDEN, and they won't even show up on the GEM desktop!

That's all there is to it. Procopy will even copy your new creation if you use doubled sided protected copy mode. I used this method to fit all three of King's Quest III's disk onto one extended format disk.

NOTE: Use the new twister format program in STart and your resulting disk will load twice as fast as the original.

Well, there's another month shot down the tubes!! See you all next month.

Computer Music

MIDITALK

By Mitch Wells (C.H.A.O.S.)

Well, it's been at least 3 issues since my last installment, but sometimes life is like that. Much has happened in the world of the Atari ST and MIDI since we last chatted, and I'd like to share some of it with you.

To begin with, not much is happening on the 8-bit front. Hybrid Arts has come out with a new step-time note sequencer to work as a companion to Miditrack III which sells for about $60.00. From what I understand the sequencer is like a high-level language that is programmed in much the same way as you would program in BASIC but with NOTE commands and such. I Haven't seen it yet, but a friend of mine has ordered it and I'll let you know if it turns out to be anything. Also, Hybrid Arts has discounted the 8-bit software and interface BIG TIME, so if you were thinking about MIDI for your XE, come on into the store (Elderly Instruments in downtown Lansing) and talk to me... I'll see what I can do for you.

Now for ST stuff... Remember I told you that the Steinberg PRO-24 sequencer which sold for $295 couldn't be worth the money or something like that... Man, what a lie that was. On a whim, I ordered the program and it has totaly changed my life. My clothes are clean now, I have french toast every morning, I drive a BMW and Man O' Man, can I make music with it. (Most of that was a lie too, I mean, can you see me eating french toast!!) Ok... Steinberg PRO-24 is basically a sequencer with unlimited sequences, a MIDI recorder with 80,000+ note memory, a patch librarian for your Casio CZ-101 and DX/TX7 and easy to use. I hope to demonstrate it sometime soon (read: late spring general meeting) and I'll dare to show you what it can do. If you can't wait, just call me at the store and I'll set up a time that you can see mine run.

There are soooo many companies jumping on the ST/MIDI bandwagon, it's crazy! There's DR. T's Software (Remember my article about KCS ST - a great program albeit cumbersome and with poor documentation), Hybrid Arts has released a full MIDI/SMPTE audio/video editing system based on 2 ST's, their ADAP sampling rack (a device, which when connected to an ST, will digitize sound to a very high fidelity and play it back when triggered via MIDI), SMPTETRACK ST (their sequencing software), SMPTE interface (SMPTE is a communication protocol for syncing video equipment to film and audio equipment and visa versa) and your choice of video playback/editor and MIDI keyboard... Quite a system. Sonus (who makes about the best Commodore MIDI software in my opinion) has released the Masterpiece ST software package... It runs about $500 (whew!) but claims to do everything the Steinberg PRO-24 does. Beam Team has released a number of patch librarians and will have a full-featured sequencer out by summer. Okay, you don't remember... Patches are different sound settings for synthesizers and a patch librarian stores the sound datd to disk and transmits this data to the synthesizer through MIDI. And, if I can ever get together with John Baker or Brian Goluska (which I hope to do soon [read: no car]) there will be a demo of MIDISOFT's Metatrack ST sequencer in the club library... This software, I also mentioned before, but was unable to get much info on it... Well now, here's the demo that they sent to me... It is a fully-functioning version of their sequencer except that it is limited to 100 notes... Just check it out. Note: This software demo IS copyrighted and cannot be copied -- Still I'm sure that there will be a provision for club members to borrow the original to check it out. Passport (one of the earlier MIDI software companies) has promised ST software, on it goes. And finally, Hybrid Arts has released EZ-Score ST which will turn your EZ-Track ST files into musical scores and print them out... Mark Smathers tells me that there are a number of EZ-Track files available for downloading on the various data services like Comp-U-Serve.

Next time, I will start a series of articles (which will probably come out as regularly as my past efforts) about MIDI -- mainly, what a sequencer is, what a patch librarian is, etc., to give all you fellow ATARI users an idea of what you can do with all this stuff...

(Ed. Note - Although MULE is a very old game for the 8-Bit Atari Series Computer, it remains a favorite due to the multi-player and stratagy play. Here is a mini review by someone who has just discovered the fun of MULE.)

A Review of M.U.L.E.
By David W. Altoft (G.K.A.U.G.)

I have tried the game of M.U.L.E. and I liked it very much. It is loads of fun and it is not hard to learn. First you have the beginner's screen to practice on and learn how to play it.

Then when you are ready, you can move on to the standard game where you go 12 months against either other players, up to 4 players, or against the computer. You try to beat your opponents, and become the First Founder. Then when you are good enough, you can go on to the tournament game for more action.

On all the games you can run the demo program to see how the games are played. This allows you to get an idea of how to play.

Now to tell you what's in each game:

Beginner: You start with six months on the planet and after you get your land you put a M.U.L.E. on it. You work your land for: food on flat land or near the river, energy on flat land, and Smithore on or near the mountain areas. But watch out for the pirate ships, they steal Smithore.

Standard: You play it like the beginners game, but you have the added fun of trying to survive 12 months. You can also try to buy more land to increase your production of products.

Tournament: You get to survey your property for Crystite, get a M.U.L.E. to mine Crystite on flat land. Then the pirates will take the Crystite instead of Smithore since the crystalite is worth a lot of money.

(GKAUG is sponsoring MULE Tournaments at its next meetings.)

Telecom Review

BBS/ST FROM QMI
Reviewed by Bill Rayl (W.A.U.G.)

About three months ago, I ordered BB/ST from QMI. At that time, QMI was working to fix a few bugs in the program and didn't wish to release the Bulletin Board System until those bugs were fixed. I like that in a company--much better than "patch it now and make 'em pay for a fixed version in a month or so." Just last week, I received the program, and it was definitely worth the wait!

From a Sysop's point of view, BB/ST is a dream come true. The Sysop functions are all contained in a number of menus and sub-menus you can become familiar with in a matter of minutes. At the main Sysop menu, a few of the things you can do are: call out from the BBS to another system; fake a BB/ST command without logging on (helpful in testing out customized commands--more on this later); read notes to the Sysop; perform a number of Disk functions; and access the system editors.

The system editors are used to modify parts of the BBS. There is a separate editor for menus, BBS configuration, user information, and downloads. Menus in BB/ST are completely customizable. The Sysop can determine what characters correspond to what commands, and can even create commands by chaining existing commands or writing "mini-language" programs. In these mini-language programs, you can execute external programs, set up character and numeric variables, do arithmetic computations, create loop structures, and run other mini-language programs. This is a neat feature that will allow BB/ST owners to really personalize their systems.

In the configuration editor, you have over 90 different items that can be set to accomodate your needs. You can set defaults for system file names and locations, access levels (from zero to 32767), and various other user and system defaults.

I could go on for pages and pages about the sysop functions alone, but there's a lot more to this BBS. For instance, the message base is unusual in a couple of respects. First of all, it is a tree structure. Learning to get around the tree will take a little time for the unsuspecting BBS user used to linear message bases, but the time taken is well spent. The tree structure is easy to get around, is faster, and (a big plus for us one drive owners) takes up little space on a disk. I have over 100 messages on the system now and all the message files take up less than 30K. For those who just can't get the hang of traversing the tree, BB/ST can also allow for linear-type reading.

The second unusual feature is the ability to "attach" a file to a message. When this is done, a person can read a message concerning a file and, if the file sounds interesting, it can be downloaded right then and there, without ever leaving the message base!

File transfers can be made using Xmodem, Xmodem/CRC, Ascii, or batch Ymodem protocols. Files can be listed (and downloaded) by file number or name. Listings can also be done by date or since last on (new files).

The BBS also has an online polling facility allowing any user to create a set of questions that others can answer. Percentages are calculated from the responses which can be viewed by users at large.

One other nice feature is the ability to use VIDTEX pictures, viewable by callers using Flash! (from Antic) or the soon to be released ST Professional (from QMI). The BBS comes with a small public domain program which allows you to convert Degas pictures to VIDTEX format.

Now that I've heaped tons of praise on this BBS, I think I should mention a few features not in this version. First, here are the things QMI says will be in version 1.1: time/credit accounting for each user (as things are, users can't be credited for the time they take to upload); background Sysop while a user is on-line (currently the user cannot perform any function while the Sysop is fiddling with things); 16 color VIDTEX graphics; and multi-line/multi-user capability! QMI says they will offer upgrades to registered owners for $5, which is, in my opinion, very reasonable.

At this time, there are only a couple things I would like to see incorporated in a future version of this software. The first thing is a few more commands in the mini-language (such as the ability to read in lines or characters from a text file). But, since you can run external programs, this isn't really necessary.

The second thing would be the ability to "lock out" certain undesirable (i.e. obnoxious) people from logging on. Unless the person habitually changed their login name, this could be easily accomplished by creating a file containing the names of said undesirables, which would be scanned at each newuser login. It can get real tedious deleting a person twice a day (though I haven't had this problem yet, I have heard horror stories from other Sysops).

Overall, this is an impressive piece of software. Now, there's only one problem ... where am I going to get the money for a hard drive?!

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ST Review

ST FORTH/MT by Data Becker and ABACUS
Reviewed for MAM by: Peter K. Enberg

ST FORTH/MT is a powerful new version of the Forth programming language for the Atari ST. In this article I will attempt to point out both its strengths and weaknesses. Since most readers are unlikely to be familiar with Forth itself, I will also try to explain a little about Forth as we go. If this article generates any interest I will write some more articles about Forth and the various versions of it.

Upon opening up the directory, the first thing one notices is that most of the disk seems empty. This is the first indication that ST FORTH/MT is a traditional Forth, unlike either of the other Forths I have examined for the ST.

Traditionally, Forths have their own way of dealing with disk space: the disk operating system is ignored except for sector I/O since the disk is considered to be made up of consecutive numbered 1 k blocks or "screens". This makes Forths independent of DOS's and considerably speeds up disk I/O; however, this puts the responsibility upon the programmer to keep track of his usage.

The next thing one notices after opening the special startup file and passing the title screen is that ST FORTH/MT comes up on a screen blank except for a cursor. Again, ST FORTH/MT is a traditional Forth with a command line interpreter rather than drop-down menus etc. In fact, ST FORTH/MT, although including words to access all the low-level ST routines including GEMDOS, has no way to access AES or VDI.

Okay, so let's try something. We type 5 6 + . <CR> and ST FORTH/MT responds by taking 5 and 6, adding them, then displaying 11 Integer Ok. Yes, ST FORTH/MT is alive and interactive!

Next let's try a little programming. In Forth this means adding to the dictionary. The dictionary is a linked list in which each entry has a name it can be called by, a pointer to a generic routine for the type of that entry, and a parameter field containing the data for the entry. In the case of a machine language routine, the data is the routine itself and the pointer points directly to the data. When you type a word, Forth simply looks for it in the dictionary and does it.

Everything is here: variables, constants, strings, arrays, machine language routines, and high level Forth routines. This is what is contained in the .dat file that you load on startup.

Suppose we want a routine that adds 6 to a number we type in and displays the result. We'll call it ADDSIX and define it like this:

: ADDSIX 6 + . ; <CR>

Now when we type 5 ADDSIX <CR> we get 11 Integer Ok. If we type 578 ADDSIX <CR> we get 584 Integer Ok. What fun!

We can go on this way for a while, trying out various commands as explained in the manual and in it's excellent glossary of the hundreds of words in the initial dictionary. However, what if we want to save the definitions we have created? One way is to save our expanded dictionary to the disk. This, however, is a complicated procedure (fortunately described in Chapter 10 of the manual) and not usually done. The more common way is to create the definitions in text form on the disk using the editor, and then loading them into the dictionary when they are needed.

The editor ("EDDY"), is itself in this form, and can be activated by typing "100 LOAD" and then watching while the 38 blocks of text are digested. Type EDDY <CR> and you're on your way. This assumes you have a monochrome monitor. If you don't, you're in trouble!!!

My biggest complaint about ST FORTH/MT is that the only description of the editor commands one gets is the help menu that appears at the bottom of the screen in tiny hi-rez characters. The editor doesn't work in color if this menu is present. Although the manual does explain in Chapter 10 how to deactivate the help menu, you have to have access to a mono system to do it. Then unless you were smart enough to write down or ALT-HELP the menu beforehand, you now have a working editor with no way to tell how to use it. I sincerely hope ABACUS does something about this in their earliest update.

Once into the disk blocks, one finds several other useful utilities. There is an assembler for adding machine language routines; a decompiler and a disassembler for digging into the dictionary to see what makes it tick, and a complete floating point package which once loaded, can be activated or deactivated by simply typing FP or INT.

To summarize, ST FORTH/MT, looked at from the point of view of an experienced, traditional Forth programmer is a rich, fast, straight-forward implementation of Forth. A person experienced with GEM, however, will probably be frustrated at its inability to write GEM applications; and a novice to Forth will probably need to acquire several good books on Forth to make any sense of it. Although for under $50, it is worth getting if one is at all interested. One can only hope that perhaps ABACUS will release a companion tutorial volume; it would then make an excellent beginning Forth.

Laid back with (a) Fifth
By: John Unger Zussman

Originally published in Info World on Oct. 4, 1982 and has been widely reprinted since then.

BASIC, FORTRAN, COBOL... These programming languages are well known and more or less well-loved throughtout the computer industry. However, there are numerous other languages which are less well known, yet still have ardent devotees. In fact, these little-known languages generally have the most fanatic admirers. For those who wish to know more about these obscure languages, and why they are obscure, I present the following catalog:

SIMPLE... is an acronym for "Sheer Idiot's Monopurpose Programming Linguistic Environment." This language, developed at Hanover's College for Technical Misfits, was designed to make it impossible to write code with any errors in it. The commands of this language are therefore confined to BEGIN, END and STOP. Furthermore, no matter how the commands are arranged, it is impossible to receive a syntax error.

Programs written in SIMPLE do nothing useful. Thus, they achieve results similar to programs written in other languages without the tedious frustrating process of testing and debugging.

SLOBOL... is best known for its tremendously slow compiler. While many compilers allow you to take a coffee break while they compile, SLOBOL allows you to travel to Bolivia to pick up the coffee. Forty-three programmers are known to have died of boredom while sitting at their console and waiting for a SLOBOL program to be compiled. Weary SLOBOL programmers often turn to a related (but infinitely faster) language, COCAINE.

VALGOL... was developed in Southern California's San Fernando Valley in hope of educating Valley girls in programming.

VALGOL commands include REALLY, LIKE, WELL, TUBULAR, GROSS ME OUT and Y'KNOW. Variables are assigned with the =LIKE and =TOTALLY operators. Other operators include the "Californian Booleans" FERSURE and NOWAY. Repetitions of code are handled in FOR-SURE loops. Here is a sample VALGOL program:

```
14      LIKE, Y*KNOW (I MEAN) START
%%      IF
PI      A =LIKE BITCHEN AND
OI      B =LIKE TUBULAR AND
 9      C =LIKE GRODY**MAX
4K      (FERSURE)**2
18      THEN
4I      FOR I =LIKE 1 TO OH MAYBE      100
86      DO WAH + (DITTY**2)
 9      BARF(I) =TOTALLY GROSS(OUT)
-17     SURE
 IF     LIKE BAG THIS PROGRAM
  ?     REALLY
 $$     LIKE TOTALLY (Y*KNOW)
```

VALGOL is somewhat declaimed by its users for its unfriendly error messages. For example, when the user makes a syntax error, it replies with the message "GAG ME WITH A SPOON."

LAIDBACK... was developed at the (now defunct) Marin County Center for T'ai Chi, Mellowness and Computer Programming.

This center was ideal for programmers who liked to soak in hot tubs while they worked. However, and unfortuantely, few programmers could survive there long, since the outlawed Coca Cola and pizza in favor of bean curd and ferrari.

Many mourn the demise of LAIDBACK because of its reputation as a gentle and non-threatening language. For example, LAIDBACK responded to user syntax errors with the message, "SORRY MAN, I CAN'T DEAL WITH THAT."

C- ... was named for the grade its creator received when he submitted it to his professor in Graduate-Programming Class. C- is best described as a low-level programming language. In fact, the language generally requires more C- statements than machine code statements to execute a given task. In this respect, it is very similar to COBOL.

FIFTH... is a precision mathematical language in which data types refer to quantities. The data types range from CC, OUNCE, SHOT and JIGGER to FIFTH (hence the name of the language,) LITER, MAGNUM, and GROTTO. Commands refer to ingredients, such as CHABLIS, CHARDONNAY, CABERNET, GIN, VERMOUTH, VODKA, SCOTCH and WHATEVERSAROUND.

There are many versions of FIFTH, each of which reflects the sophistication and financial status of its users. Commands in the ELITE dialect include VSOP and LAFIATTE, while commands in the GUTTER dialect include HOOTCH and RIPPLE. The latter dialect is a favorite of frustrated FORTH programmers.

LITHP ... is unremarkable, save for the absence of the letter S in its character set, yet is said to be useful in processing liththth.

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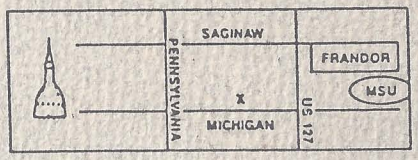

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